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Special Issue on Partition – IR 21(3) – Guest Editor Introduction

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The Partition of the British India in 1947 divided the people and territory on religious and confessional basis.[1] Hence, the Partition further communalized the inter-religious relationships. It also disturbed the syncretic culture of the land. Most importantly, the Partition ever since has been turned into a politicized memory-project aimed at securing and maintaining power.

Consequently, even after more than 74 years of the Partition, the political differences and cultural segregation on religious and confessional basis, especially in the case of Hindus and the Muslims, continues poisoning the politics that succeeded the British India.

Over the years, as films, press, and television have powerfully evolved in India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, these media have acted as means to manufacture, reproduce, recreate, and disseminate the theory of cultural differences based on religion. These cultural apparatuses have become more effective with the rise of majoritarian nationalism in India and Pakistan, in particular. By majority and majoritarian one does not mean the demographic majority. The majoritarianism ideology is usually constructed and thrust upon the others by a small segment of the population, which dominates the country's political and economic resources and enjoys high social status. The ideas and values of such dominant groups are defined as nationalism, which the other people follow/"forced" to follow.[2]

With the political rise of majoritarian nationalism, the political, social, and cultural chasms between the majority and minority communities have only widened. The majoritarian nationalism has thrived by otherizing the minority groups (for instance, the Muslims in India and the Hindus in Pakistan) as the fifth column undermining the majority community's existence. Not only does the majority otherize the minorities but in most cases, even the otherized group-(s) internalize such otherizations. In turn, minoritized communities otherize the majority.[3] In the process, arguably, the minority groups have embraced conservative, and in some cases, radical ideologies. Like the majority, the minority

Noted Pakistani scholar, the late Rubina Saigol, had promised to contribute a paper to this special issue. However, the bells tolled for her, one of Pakistan's finest scholars, before she could submit her article to this special issue. The editors and contributors of this special issue, as a humble tribute to her scholarly contributions, dedicate this endeavor to her memory.

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communal groups start defining what cultural aspects belong to them and what do not. For example, to prove themselves different from the majority community, considerable sections of the Indian Muslims have embraced conservative ideologies and values; a few others have also turned radical.

The politics around Hinduism and strong emergence of Hindutva since 1980s have electorally benefitted the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which was formed in April 1980. Since early 1990s the followers and practitioners of Hindutva politics have reaped electoral benefits and the communal version of Hinduism has largely bulldozed all other established public narratives related to religion in India after the BJP scored a major electoral victory in 2014 parliamentary elections, and Narendra Modi was elevated as the prime minister of the country.

After May 2014, reports of Muslims been mob-lynched on the instigation of cow vigilantes were flashed in the international media. Though the cow-related violence existed even before, yet it has multiplied many times post-2014. In 2017, *India Spend*'s content analysis of the English-language media outlets demonstrated that between 2010 and 2017 Muslims were the target of 51% of violence centered on bovine issues and comprised 86% of 28 Indians killed in 63 incidents. Notably, 97% of the attacks were reported after May 2014, and about half of the cow-related violence – 32 of 63 cases – was reported from the states governed by the BJP. Of the 28 Indians killed, 24 were Muslim.[4] Arguably, the cow became a pretext. The fact of the matter is that violence directed against the Muslims in general because of their religious faith and has increased.[5]

After returning to office with more number of seats in 2019, the Modi government introduced the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) which is viewed as maliciously anti-Muslim. Under the CAA, only non-Muslims from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh are entitled to Indian citizenship (provided they fulfill other eligibility criteria and conditions mentioned in the amended act). The critics say that the CAA violates the secular principles enshrined in the Indian constitution since the amendment implies that religious faith becomes a condition for Indian citizenship.[6] There were strong protests across India against the CAA. Rallies were also held in favor of the CAA. The CAA protests subsided due to outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in which, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), 47.4 lakhs (4.7 million) Indians died. The WHO number is ten times the official count[7] and is rejected by the government of India. At the time of covid in 2020, communal violence occurred in New Delhi in which about 53 people, mostly Muslims, lost their lives. Again in 2022, India has witnessed a spate of communal tensions in different parts of the country. Expressing objections over wearing of *hijab* by school and college going Muslim women students, use of loudspeakers for *Azan*, closure of meat selling shops during the Hindu festival of *Ramanavami*, use of *halal or non-halal* meat, etc., are primarily a part of

bigger social agenda of followers of Hindutva to attack everyday life of the Indian Muslims. On the basis of their reading and close observation, some of the social scientists express a fear that India might enter the stage of pogroms,[8] while a few others suspect that India is heading towards a civil war.[9]

It must be noted that communal differences between the Hindus and Muslims have existed since the colonial times. The Partition could not settle the communal issues. Frequent communal riots, ghettoization of the Muslim population, and low socio-economic status of the Muslims reported by Rajinder Sachar Committee Report (2006) portrays the story of India before Modi. In the past, however, a staunchly secular Indian constitution made it possible for the Muslims to occupy highest constitutional offices or important official positions. Indian society did not reflect the constitution's secular spirit. There had always been a vague feeling among a section of Hindus that they are taken for granted by the political establishment, which they accuse of engaging into Muslim appeasement politics. Post-2014, such feelings are vociferously expressed in public. This growing public assertion of minority syndrome among the majority community is a reason for growing communal tensions and widening religious distances in "new" India.

Post-2014, although the BJP is singled out and accused, the other political parties are also engaged in Hindutva politics for electoral reasons. As a larger section of Hindu population has been communally and politically Hinduized by the proponents of Hindutva, the other political parties know well that if they differ on larger religious issues, they may not get success in elections. Some of the regional parties that are opposed to the BJP such as the Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress in West Bengal are trying to establish their own regional version of "an aggressive Hindu identity."[10] Interestingly, on the other hand, Shiv Sena, a regional political party from Maharashtra, regarded more Hindu party than the BJP, is one of the staunch opponents to the BJP's politics. BJP and Shiv Sena were together for decades before decoupling in 2019 when Sena decided to part away from it and form a coalition government in Maharashtra with Congress and Nationalist Congress Party.

India's ideological nemesis, i.e.,, Pakistan has hardly done better when it comes to religious minorities. From the beginning, discrimination against religious minorities in Pakistan has been formalized through the Constitution of Pakistan (CoP) and penal codes. Though the CoP in its Article 25 (1) guarantees equality regardless of citizens' faith and Article 5 provides freedom of religion to religious minorities, yet there are provisions in the CoP that override articles 25 (1) and 5.

Consider the following: Article 2 declares "Islam shall be the State religion of Pakistan," while Article 31 stipulates a number of state-mandated steps to ensure "Islamic way of life." Likewise, Article 41 (2) provides "a person shall not be qualified for election as President unless he is a Muslim." When exclusionist statutes could not be anchored in the CoP, penal codes were

amended to institutionalize and structure violence on confessional basis. For instance, colonial era Blasphemy Laws were amended in 1982 and 1984 in order to target the minorities. Likewise, the Law of Evidence 1984 provocatively discriminates against women in Pakistan as well the minorities[11] .

Exclusionist employment policies, weak parliamentary representation, socio-cultural marginalization (bordering on apartheid) and grabbing of minorities' religious endowments are commonplace. For instance, only in Hyderabad district in the Sindh province, of the historically existing 350 Hindu temples and Sikh gurdwaras, less than 10 are privately managed presently. The rest have been either occupied or sold by the Evacuee Property Board.[12]

Organized violence occasionally translates into mob attacks on minority-neighborhoods or lynching. Target killings, since the 1980s, arguably amount to piecemeal genocide at least in the case of numerically miniscule (half-a-million) Ahmadia community. Since May 1, 1984, when the first Ahmadia was target-killed, 273 members of the community have been assassinated.[13] Likewise, forced conversions of young women and teen-aged Hindu, Christian, and Sikh girls constitute another growing "trend" depicting gendered nature of structured violence. Teenage girls from minority communities are abducted, forcibly married to a Muslim and to justify these abductions, the abducted girls are forced to embrace Islam. Over 2,800 such young women and girls converted to Islam during 2012–17.[14] To deal with these unlawful conversions, the Sindh provincial assembly passed a bill in 2016 outlawing forced conversions. Nevertheless, the forceful conversion remains an issue. In March 2022, a Hindu girl, Pooja Kumari, was shot dead in Rohri town of Sukkur District in Sindh province for resisting abduction for conversion and forced marriage.

Perhaps the real danger is posed by the hyper-Talibanized society. Trifles can land minority members in life-threatening situations.[15] If one views mainstream media as an indicator mirroring deep-seated hegemonic attitudes, the excerpt below from a joint report by the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH) and the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) is sufficient to sum up the plight of religious minorities in Pakistan:

"Prejudice and stereotypes also prevail in media. The negative images portrayed of the Hindu community echo those that prevailed within the politics of undivided India in the 1920s; the media projects the Hindus as agents of India, and Hindu characters in television programs and films are depicted as 'opportunist,' 'usurers,' and 'unpatriotic' to Pakistan. Christians are portrayed as 'agents of the West,' and Ahmadis are referred to within Urdu newspapers as 'Jewish agents,' disloyal to Pakistan, and enemies of Islam."[16]

One may say the same about textbooks and other ideological state apparatuses.[17] Minoritized on the basis of faith, communities of Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, and Ahmadis have been stigmatized, ostracized, and silenced into submission. Ironically/tragically, Pakistan's ideological nemesis, i.e.,, Bangladesh mirrors a similar image when it comes to religious minorities.

In 1947, the Muslim-majority East Bengal became East Pakistan. However, soon after the Partition tensions between the eastern and western wings of Pakistan, initially over the language issue, pitched the two against each other. East Pakistan wanted Bengali as the state language instead of Urdu. Mohammad Ali Jinnah and his lieutenant, Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan, advocated (and imposed) Urdu as the national language. The dispute triggered passionate protests across East Pakistan as early as 1948. In 1952, the Bengali language movement found its first martyrs: two students were killed, and a few others were injured. In 1955, Bengali was awarded the status of a national language, in the succeeding years, many more differences cropped up between the two wings of Pakistan. Consequently, in 1971, after months of civil war and another Indo–Pakistan war, Bangladesh was eventually liberated (In mainstream Pakistani discourses, Bangladesh liberation is viewed as the "Fall of Dacca" or separation). In Bangladesh, religion began to overshadow secular nationalism in the 1970s.

With the growing radicalism in Bangladesh, religious minorities especially the Hindus and Buddhists have faced violence. More often than not, the Hindus in Bangladesh are subjected to violence as a tit-for-tat response to anti-Muslim violence in India. For instance, after the demolition of the Babri Mosque in 1992 in India, the Hindu neighborhoods were raided in Bangladesh. Of late, the CAA controversy in India led to attacks on the Hindus in Bangladesh. After Modi's visit to Dhaka in March 2021, at least 10 people were killed and dozens injured in violent protests. An Islamist outfit, Hefazat-e-Islam, spearheaded the street agitation. In Brahmanbaria Hindu temples were torched and ransacked.[18] The Hefazat accused the Modi government of stoking violence against the Muslims in India. Likewise, in October 2021, during the Hindu festival of Durga Puja, violence convulsed Bangladesh as the Hindus were targeted indiscriminately. The October violence was triggered by an alleged "blasphemous post" that went viral on social media. Consequently, several Hindu homes were attacked. In Cumila, violence broke out after a copy of the Quran was found inside a Durga Puja pandal.[19]

It is notable that the textbooks, literature, media, and films in all the three countries help the manufacturing of consent aligned to majoritarian groups. In this context, this special issue attempts to look at why the cultural differences, which used to create communal tensions in the British India are still a matter for concern in India, Pakistan, and

Bangladesh. It will also look at how mass media, films, and textbooks in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh have produced, reproduced, and constructed the Partition. To be exact, the contributions in this edition attempt to look at the following:

(1) How were Hindi and Urdu communalized?
(2) How textbooks produce, reproduce, and narrate the Partition of British India?
(3) How will mass media in India and Pakistan recreate and present the Partition?
(4) How have the film industries in India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan depicted Partition-related stories on the silver screen?

This special issue begins with a paper by Amit Ranjan, which chiefly argues that more than the two languages, Hindi and Urdu, are identified with different religions: Hindi is, largely, deemed as the language of the Hindus, while Urdu is associated with the Muslims. The religious identity assigned to the two languages was communally contested during the colonial India. In the independent India, the growing distance between the Hindus and Muslims has also segregated the two languages.

The second paper by Ritika Verma and Anjali Gera Roy analyses recent mainstream Bollywood movies. This paper looks at the Partition as an absent presence that continues to inhabit and shape the lived experiences of individuals and communities. This concept is explored by two sub-genres of movies: first, those that depict a cultural loss or, alternatively, a lack of access to cultural symbols and consequently argue for a shared humanity, undivided by geographical boundaries. *Veer-Zaara* (2004), *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* (2015), and *PK* (2014) are a few examples. The second sub-genre is the nationalistic movies that rely on the dichotomous positioning of India versus Pakistan to propel the idea of a monochromatic Indian nationalism. *Uri: The Surgical Strike* (2019) is the latest in a spate of such movies. The authors argue that it is only by acknowledging the lingering presence, albeit visually absent, of the Partition that we can comprehend, in a holistic manner, the discourses of nationalism and communal identity that the two categories of movies make the case for.

The third paper by Devika Mittal focuses on the Partition narratives produced and circulated through state-approved curriculum and textbooks in India. It looks at how the Indian state has narrativized the Partition, the events that led to it and the aftermath. Mittal's paper analyses history textbooks of two education boards: the Central Board of Secondary Education, and the Rajasthan Board of Secondary Education. The paper reflects on how India places and makes sense of the Partition in its history and in the nationalist

ideology. While deliberating on the process of constructing an image of the national self and that of the "other," it deconstructs the representation of Muslims.

The fourth paper by Mazhar Abbas analyses the process of reimagining and reproducing the Partition of the Indian Subcontinent in 1947 and Pakistan in 1971 in the textbooks during the dictatorial regimes of General Zia-ul-Haq and General Pervez Musharraf, respectively. The study uses the textbooks of Social Studies and Pakistan Studies from Grade-IV to Grade-X compiled by the Punjab Textbook Board. In this paper, partitions present two different scenarios for a fascinating comparison – e.g., in 1947, Pakistan was an emergent state, while in 1971, a parent state. The content analysis suggests that the state-sponsored curriculum material gave birth to majoritarian nationalism, which in turn, bolstered the process of othering the minority groups in the country. Thus, this study argues that the state-patronized curriculum fostered religious nationalism, rather than secular nationalism, which, subsequently, encouraged majoritarian nationalism and caused alienation of other groups.

The fifth paper by Qaisar Abbas argues that despite embarking on divergent political pathways after independence, India and Pakistan are amazingly similar in that nationalistic and majoritarian dogmas have become predominant sources of power and control for the political elite. Against this backdrop, this article analyses Khadija Mastoor's Urdu novel *Zameen* (Land) within the context of migrancy and patriarchy, as determined by the state ideological thrust. It explores the upheavals a middle-class Muslim family goes through when it arrives in Pakistan following the blood-stained migration on a colossal scale. The study argues that it was the conservative state ideology that further strengthened the deep-rooted patriarchal structure in society. It narrates the socio-psychological transformations in the newly created state that determined women's public and private space and the dynamics that made women second-class citizens. It also explores dimensions of migrancy and the social ills it generated, as revealed by the novel's textual intricacies. Textual analysis, in this sense, becomes the methodological tool in exploring multidimensional facets of the unfolding plot of the novel.

The sixth paper by Farooq Sulehria focuses on Lollywood, or the Lahore-based film industry, productions on the theme of Partition. Lollywood rarely explored the uneasy topic of the Partition. Even though Pakistan was, until the 1990s, one of the 10 largest film-producing countries, hardly a dozen or so films could be produced in the last seven decades on the Partition in 1947. The break with East Pakistan in 1971 remains a taboo for obvious reasons: Islamabad denies genocide in East Pakistan, while the surrender before the "arch enemy" India is too embarrassing to be revived. This paper notes that the Lollywood productions explored in this study drew huge audiences and were indeed successful ventures in terms of popularity. It contends that Lollywood has reproduced as well as resisted the statist narratives on the Partition.

Arguably, the Partition in Pakistani films has been delineated in its complexity. Most importantly, these productions approach the plight of women with a humanist viewpoint.

The seventh paper by Fahmidul Haq observes that in the memory of the Bangladeshi people, 1971 is relatively fresh and in the contemporary Bangladeshi politics the War of Liberation plays a vital role. The winding political trajectory of Bangladesh has influenced the discourses of cinema – producing less films on the 1947 Partition and more films on the 1971 Liberation War. Independent filmmakers made a few short films related to 1971 in the late 1980s and the number of productions increased in the new millennium where Sheikh Hasina has been in power since 2008. Different art forms have portrayed both 1947 and 1971 – the two historical incidents that have heavily shaped the political and cultural characteristics of Bangladesh. This article investigates why there is a scarcity of 1947 films and an abundance of 1971 films in Bangladesh? It reviews the characteristics and aspects of the films related to both 1947 and 1971. It also examines how contemporary politics determine the content of the period films.

The eighth and last paper in this special issue by Afroja Shoma observes that the Partition in 1947 and the birth of Bangladesh in 1971 are two different events, yet researchers have found them to be intertwined. One of the main queries of her study is to find how the Bangladeshi people have perceived the Partition of the British India. Do they recognize the liberation war as an extension of the Partition? In search of answers, this study excavates the collective memory of the Bangladeshi people. In doing so, this study analyses 12 Bengali novels focusing on the Partition and the liberation war as the literature is considered a great archive of shared memory.

Notes

1 In some cases "other factors" such as canal headwork etc were also taken into account by Sir Cyril Radcliffe headed Punjab and Bengal Boundary Commissions to demarcate boundary between India and Pakistan. See Amit Ranjan " Rivers and canals as "other factors" in partition of India" Water History Volume 13, Issue 3, October 2021, 319-335.

2 See Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (Routledge: Oxon and New York, 1994, Indian Re-print 2015). Amit Ranjan, "Language as an identity: Hindi-Non-Hindi Debates in India," *Society and Culture in South Asia* 7, no. 2 (July 2021): 314–337.

3 *Ibid*.

4 Delna Abraham and Ojaswi Rao, "86% killed in cow-related violence since 2010 are Muslim, 97% attacks after Modi govt came to power". *Hindustan Time*, (July 16, 2017). Accessed on November 18, 2021: https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/86-killed-in-cow-related-violence-since-2010-are-muslims-97-attacks-after-modi-govt-came-to-power/story-w9CYOksvgk9joGSSaXgpLO.html.

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Language, religion, and identity: Hindi and Urdu in colonial and post-colonial India

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Language, religion, and identity: Hindi and Urdu in colonial and post-colonial India

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ABSTRACT

This paper traces the history of a widening distance and constructed difference between Hindi and Urdu, and their communal identification in colonial and post-colonial India. It examines how majoritarian politics has shaped the language related issues in independent India. Finally, based on limited fieldwork in the Indian city of Mumbai, this paper tries to find out what language does common people speak.

With the rise of religious nationalism in colonial India, Hindi and Urdu were communalized and separated from each other. A large section of Hindus began considering Hindi as their language, and several Muslims identified themselves with Urdu. The British colonialist further communally fueled the language issue. The political controversies constructed over the language issue during the colonial years continue in post-colonial times. The two languages have been turned sacred by their proponents, and their religious imagery has been created by using different forms of communication[1].

Since 1947, supporters of Hindi language have been demanding to recognise Hindi as a national instead of official language. This demand grew strong with the rise of Hindu nationalism in the 1980s. Although other political parties also use Hinduism for political and electoral benefits, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), formed in 1980, considers itself a "real" Hindu nationalist party. The BJP attained political prominence and made a substantive electoral gain during the movement for *Ram Janam Bhoomi* (Lord Rama's birth place) that eventually led to demolition of the Babri mosque in 1992. Between 1989 and 1991 ,BJP increased its vote share 1.8 times to reach 20.1 %. In the Hindi speaking north Indian belt party's vote share jumped by 10 percentage points. In the West, BJP"s vote share went beyond 30% in 1991: it already touched 25 % in 1989. It already reached 25 % in 1989[2]. The temple movement and demolition of the Babri mosque, catapulted the BJP to get elected into power in some states, such as Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh. It became an important opposition party at centre in the early 1990s and was in power with the help of its coalition partners in 1998–1999, and again from

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1999 to 2004. In the 2014 parliamentary elections, breaking the political myth that a single party cannot receive the majority of its own, the BJP won 282 out of 543 total seats alone; however, the party decided to form a government along with their pre-election coalition partners. In the 2019 parliamentary elections, the BJP increased its tally to 303.

Along with many other issues, BJP promotes Sanskritized Hindi. Modern means of communication are used to reinforce traditional values and colonial thought on Hindi-Urdu differences. However, Urdu is very similar to Hindi as a language except in two respects: First, unlike Hindi, Urdu is written in the Persian script, and second, Hindi employs Sanskrit-derived words, and Urdu uses Persian and Arabic[3]. This paper discusses how religious identity was forged around Hindi and Urdu during colonial years and re-inforced in post-colonial times. However, as the last section of this paper shows, the language debate is mainly limited to the cultural and political elites who advocate for "purity" and "standardization" of their language and linguistic use. At the same time, common people speak a mixed language.

Hindi-Urdu issues and politics in Colonial India

There are two thoughts on the birth of the Urdu language. The first one traces its evolution in military camps in early medieval India. The word "Urdu" was first used around 1780 by the poet Ghulam Hamdani Mushafi (1750–1824). It is derived from Turkish word Ordu which means camp, a military cantonment or a place of residence of the elite (Urdu-e-Mualla)[4]. Mir Amman Dehlavi, an employee of Fort William College Calcutta (now Kolkata) was one of the pioneers of calling Urdu as a "camp language." In his book *Bagh-o-Bahar*, Amman opined that Urdu was born with Mughal soldiers speaking a language, which was a mixture of words taken from Arabic, Persian, Hindi, and other languages[5]. In his, *A History of Urdu Literature* Ram Babu Saksena (1927) notes that Urdu evolved in army camps of "Muslim invaders." He writes, "It [Urdu] is frequently referred to as the language of the Musalmaans as opposed to Hindi, which is claimed to be the language of the Hindus[6]." Saksena further observes that Urdu flourished owing to an interaction between a dialect of western Hindi with the Persian Language in and around Delhi and Meerut[7].

Like Saksena, Thomas Grahame Bailey also argues that Urdu developed due to an interaction of Persian speaking soldiers with the local people. For Bailey, Urdu evolved in two stages: (1) beginning in 1027, Lahore-Urdu, consisting of old Panjabi overlaid by Persian; (2) beginning in 1193, Lahore-Urdu overlaid Khari, not very different from old Panjabi and further influenced by Persian, the whole becoming Delhi-Urdu[8]. Later, with the spread of Muslim rule in other parts of India, the Urdu language spread. For example, when Muhamad bin Tughlaq invaded the Deccan and founded Daulatabad (1326), and 21 years later, when Ala-ud-Din Bahmani rebelled against him and became the first

ruler of the Bahmani dynasty, the Muslim soldiers participated in the invasion, and the rebels spoke Urdu[9]. In north India, many Muslim invaders gave up their language and adopted Urdu, while in Deccan, it was largely imposed by the invading Armies[10].

Contrary to colonial scholars, Saksena and Bailey, Faruqi (2003) finds that the early names of the Urdu language were: Hindavi, Hindi, Dihlavi, Gujri, Dakani, and Rekhta. Citing a *divan* from Mushafi, he observes that the word Urdu meant the city of Shahjahanabad (Old Delhi) rather than language. By the eighteenth century, Urdu meant the city of Delhi[11]. Rahman (2011) observes that Urdu has an ancestor which existed much before the Muslims invaded and arrived in India. More than the camps, at the marketplace, the gathering of Sufis, and during other forms of interactions people borrowed words from Persian and Arabic languages[12]. Mirza Khalil Baig suggests that Shorseni Prakrit, a dialect spoken in Central India, developed into Shorseni Apbrahmsh that further developed into Urdu[13].

It is problematic to draw linguistic differences between Hindi and Urdu[14]. However, Hindi and Urdu were separated by the British colonialists. After a tour from Gujarat to Bengal, John Borthwick Gilchrist, who was appointed as a Professor of *Hindustani* Language at Fort William College, came out with a suggestion that the East Indian Company (EIC) must replace Persian with Urdu as a majority number of people understood it[15]. At Fort Williams, Inshallah Khan, Sadal Misra and Lallooji Lal were engaged in producing works in the *Hindustani* language for budding English officers. Khan wrote authentic (*theth)* Hindavi, abjuring both Perso-Arabic and Sanskrit excess, while Lallooji Lal used Sanskritized Hindi by excising the mixed Urdu words[16]. The works attempted to justify the separate institutional existence of Hindi and Urdu. Like Fort William, the missionaries set up a shop at Serampore, near Calcutta, in the eighteenth century and then set up school book societies in many other cities separating Hindi and Urdu. The Serampore missionaries and colonial grammarians, or Fort William bureaucrats, institutionalized differences between "Muslim" *Hindustani* and "Hindu" *Hindustani* without any grand design. The differences were made due to pedagogical necessities and to train the colonial officers[17]. Although differences were attempted to make between Hindi and Urdu, *Hindustani* in *Nagari* script existed much before the colonial years. It has been standardized in the subsequent years[18].

"Hinduness" of the Hindi was thrust by colonialists first, and later the Hindu elites of North India took up the cause of Hindi-Hindu[19]. However, the linguistic situation was different on the ground. In 1846, the then newly appointed principal of Benaras Sanskrit College, James Ballantyne, asked the students to write in Hindi, which did not have many takers. The student's

response showed that the term "Hindi" had little or no importance in Benaras and nearby areas[20]. Revered as the "Father of modern Hindi" Bhartendu Harishchandra maintained that

> "Languages have three sections (*vibhag*) that is, the language spoken at home, the Language of poetry, and the written Language. It should be ascertained what the language spoken in the homes of the North-West Provinces is, since in the province of Delhi, as well as in other cities, no one speaks Hindi at home beside the Khatris and Panchahi [Western] Agravals, so much so that after every *kos* the language changes[21]."

As tensions grew between the late Mughals and EIC, the Board of Directors decreed to replace Persian with the local vernaculars for use. Thus Marathi, Bengali, Tamil, etc. replaced Persian where they were spoken. In north India *Hindustani* in the Persian script was designated as the local vernacular[22]. In the late nineteenth century, Muslim leaders, such as Sir Syed Ahmad Khan found people from up to down of India speaking one language – Urdu – while individuals like Madan Mohan Malviya made out differences in languages people in India were speaking. However, later, the Muslims claimed Urdu as a different language, while Hindus denied any such claims[23].

To promote Hindi, Banaras Institute was formed in 1861, followed by Allahabad Institute. These institutes questioned whether the regional vernacular was Urdu or Hindi and started looking for an appropriate script[24]. In Bihar and Central Provinces (now Madhya Pradesh), *Hindustani* in Persian script was replaced by Hindi in the *Nagari* script in the 1870s and 1880s respectively. In Punjab, Urdu and Persian script remained dominant until the twentieth century,[25]. although several Muslim elites adopted Urdu as their "own" language as they regarded Punjabi – a language of the Sikh rulers[26]. On the then prevailing communal situation, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had realized a long time back, "that Hindu and Muslims would not, henceforth, be able to unite on a common platform and work for common ends[27]." In 1882, when the Government formed the Hunter Commission under Sir William Hunter to review education progress in India, many prominent Hindus and Muslims, such as Raja Shiv Prasad, Bhartendu Harishchandra, and Syed Ahmad Khan deposed before the commission to argue the case of Hindi and Urdu[28]. Since 1868 Raja Shiv Prasad had campaigned to replace the Persian script, especially *shikast*, shorthand style, with *nagari*[29]. Both camps reviled him for seeking to bring the two languages together "through the doomed experiment" of publishing some of his works and a newspaper - the *Benares Akhbar* - which he founded[30].

The first organized association which was fully devoted to the cause of Hindi, *Nagari* Pracharni Sabha, was founded in 1893 at Benares[31]. Significantly, on April 18, 1900, Sir Anthony MacDonnell, Lieutenant Governor of North West Province & Oudh, initiated the order allowing "permissive-but not exclusive-use" of Devanagari in the courts of the North

West Province[32]. The order was bitterly criticized and MacDonell was perceived as sympathetic to the *Nagari*/Hindi cause. On 22 August, Urdu Defense Association held its meeting in Lucknow[33]. Mohsin-ul-Mulk developed Urdu Defense Association while Maulvi Anjuman helped Taraqqi-i-Urdu. Both committed to the cause of Urdu.

Like Hindi, the promoters of Urdu were also active in promoting "their" language. In the early nineteenth century, Urdu-speaking Muslims anticipated the danger from the rise of the Hindi language. To spread the use of Urdu, by the 1820s and 1830s, its proponents began to make use of print media. By the twentieth century, thousands of books were published by them. The printing process was led by *ulema* – scholars and teachers who were regarded as the custodian of 1200 years of oral transmission of Islamic knowledge[34]. There was also a fear that several converts into Islam might slip back into their earlier religion in the wake of relatively assertive Hinduism. Likewise, there were fears expressed about the activities of the Christian missionaries attracting several people toward their religion. This fear became stark in later years when the Mughal empire started losing its sphere of influence in India and ceased to have the legitimate power to put the holy law of Islam, the *sharia*, into operation. To overcome the conversion issues, the Muslim elites supported the idea to spread their religion by translating the Islamic texts into Urdu and other vernacular languages[35].

Masood Ashraf Raza observes that post-1857 Sepoy mutiny, most of the poets and novelists of Urdu created a Muslim particularity, which gradually started articulating nationalism among the Muslims of India. He observes, "The early Urdu novel, instead of being an imaginary literature of the nation-state, mostly dealt with negotiating an altered political landscape within its particular Muslim context[36]." This period also witnessed the rise of different groups such as reformers, traditionalists, and neo-traditionalists. The reformers advocated western education for the Muslims. The neo-traditionalists like Shibli Naumani and Akbar Allahabadi were not opposed to a western education but wanted the Muslim youth to not lose touch with their history. The traditionalists, *ulama* were for a purified religious identity for the Muslims[37]. The Muslim elites were also of view that *nagari* was inappropriate for government records because it takes too long to write and occupies too much of space. For the Muslim elites, *nagari* was the script of shopkeepers[38].

The support for Hindi also came from some prominent Hindu organizations and popular individuals of that time. Dayanand Saraswati's *Arya Samaj*, founded in 1870, as a result of the rise in influence of *Sanatan Dharma* under Pandit Shradharam Fillouri[39], supported the cause of Hindi. Saraswati declared Hindi as an Aryan language. Individuals such as Bhartendu Harishchandra used his writing to support Hindi, though his writings contain words from Persian and Arabic[40].

Likewise, Sir Syed proposed setting up an Urdu college in Aligarh to promote education in Urdu languge but did not get British approval and patronage. He ended up starting an English-medium Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, later known as the Aligarh Muslim University[41]. Sir Syed was the first to accept Hindus and Muslims as two different nations, a theory which the Hindu nationalist Vinayak Damodar Savarkar later echoed[42].

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the communal relationship between the Hindus and the Muslims had become increasingly tense. In the first phase of the history of Muslim rule, the fact that the Muslim elite was in power kept the Muslim religious consciousness dormant. It was invoked only when its grip on power was threatened[43]. The communal fissure created by the British led to communal competition between the Hindus and the Muslims, who also used different signs and symbols to identify themselves[44]. On the matters of language, the United Province's journal *Language Reader* Urdu had tilted towards Persian with no inclusion of any Hindi words, however, Hindi had included Persian and Arabic words in its fold[45].

After the formation of the All India Muslim League (AIML) in 1906, Urdu got political support and patronage. Since its formation, the AIML considered itself as the sole representative of the Muslims of India, although there were many prominent Muslim leaders such as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in the Indian National Congress (INC). The AIML found support from various sections of the Muslim population. One such section was small-service families who were prominent in the associations formed to protect the Persian script and Urdu language from 1870 onwards. They later associated especially with the more radical wing of the AIML which had a less easy relationship with the British imperialists[46].

To unite the Hindus and Muslims in a fight against the British imperialism in India, the INC leadership insisted on the use of *Hindustani*, which they thought would emerge as a common language of Hindus and Muslims[47]. Summing up his lifelong held view, four months before his assassination in 1948, Mahatma Gandhi suggested:

> "This *Hindustani* should be neither Sanskritized Hindi nor Persianized Urdu but a happy combination of both. It should also freely admit words wherever necessary from the different regional languages and also assimilate words from foreign languages, provided that they can mix well and easily with our national language... To confine oneself exclusively to Hindi or Urdu would be a crime against intelligence and the spirit of patriotism[48]."

During the anti-colonial movement, Gandhi accused both the "Hindi Pandits of Prayag" and the "Urdu Maulvis of Aligarh" of exaggerating the mutual differences between Hindi and Urdu[49].

But, within the INC, some individuals were not supportive of Gandhi's cause and favored the promotion of "pure" form of Hindi. For instance, within the INC Gandhi did not find support from those supporting the cause of the Hindi under the banner of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan (HSS) that was formed in 1910 in Allahabad[50]. For HSS members, Urdu was an alien language. Such views irritated Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and other "broader Hindi" by *Hindustani* proponents. Nehru resigned from his HSS membership in 1935[51].

Further, to promote the *Hindustani* language for communal unity, the INC leadership under the guidance of Gandhi came up with the Wardha scheme of education in 1937. Under this scheme, education was to be promoted in *Hindustani* and written in both Hindi and Urdu script. It was endorsed at the Haripura Congress session which further recommended setting up an All India Education Board. This body came into being on April 23, 1938 and was renamed *Hindustani* Talimi Sangh[52]. However, this Congress move was perceived by the AIML as propaganda to Hinduize the existing education system. To study the provisions of the Wardha scheme and present the AIML's position on it, a committee was set up under Raja of Pirpur. The committee denounced the scheme as being detrimental to the progress of Urdu language and script. It dismissed *Hindustani* as a non-existent language[53] and claimed that the Wardha scheme was trying to impose Hindi on Muslims. It referred to the United Province's education minister Sampoornanad's use of Sanskrtized Hindi as a sign of the dangers that lay ahead[54]. As a solution, the report argued in favor of making Urdu the national language of India. It demanded that it be declared as the mother tongue of all Muslim boys in the country. It also demanded a separate education board for Muslims[55]. On the origin of the language, the AIML considered Urdu as an Indian language resulting from interaction of Hindu and Islamic cultures[56]. Further, a part of resolution number 7 of the Muslim League's annual session, which was held in Lucknow in 1937 said:[57]

> . . . [T]he All India Muslim League calls upon all the Urdu speaking people of India to make every possible endeavor to safeguard the interests of their language in every field of activity with which the Central and the Provincial Governments were concerned and wherever the Urdu language was the language of the area, its unhampered use and development should be upheld and where it was not predominant language, adequate arrangement should be made for teaching it as an optional subject and in all Government Offices, Courts, Legislatures, Railway and Postal departments provision should be made for its use.

Mainly since late 1930s, the level of communal hatred or separatism turned so strong that even Muslims from the non-Urdu speaking provinces favored Urdu over their mother tongue because they felt that their religious identity is associated with the language. A.K. Fazlul Haq, a Bengali-speaking leader of the AIML, was vociferous in demanding Urdu as the national language. Dhulipala writes: "Though Bengali was the mother tongue of his [Haq's]

province and would be the medium of instruction … Haq insisted that Urdu needed to be made the compulsory Language for Muslim students "so that they may come in contact with the spirit of Islam[58]." Earlier, in July 1933 the All Bengal Urdu Association declared "Bengali is a Hinduised and Sanskritised language so in the interests of the Muslims themselves it is necessary that they should try to have one language, which cannot but be Urdu[59]."

In an article for the journal *Time and Tide* in 1940, Mohammad Ali Jinnah stated "In the six Hindu provinces '*kulturkampf*' was inaugurated. Attempts were made to have 'Bande Mataram', the Congress party song, recognized as the national anthem; the party flag recognized as the national flag, and the real national Language Urdu supplanted by Hindi[60]." After the Partition of British India in 1947 , on the issue of the state's language in Pakistan, Jinnah famously said:[61]

> "The state language, therefore, must obviously be Urdu, a language that has been nurtured by a hundred million Muslims of this sub-continent, a language understood throughout the length and breadth of Pakistan and above all, a language which, more than any other provincial language, embodies the best that is in Islamic culture and Muslim tradition and is nearest to the language used in other Islamic countries."

Pakistan accepted Urdu as national language despite having nearly around eight percent of speakers and opposition from the Bengali speakers, such as Dhirendranath Datta in the constituent assembly of Pakistan[62]. The language issue sowed the first seed of difference between Bengali-speaking East wing and West Pakistan. Eventually, in 1971, after months of civil war and assistance from India[63], East Pakistan separated from its western wing and Bangladesh was liberated.

Contrary to Jinnah, Gandhi even argued for using the same script to write all Indian languages except Urdu to promote *Hindustani*. He wanted to continue the use of *nastaliq*, derived from Arabic via Persian[64]. The Hindu-Urdu controversy further developed with the development of radio broadcasting. Morphology, syntax, phonology, and genre that made distinction between Hindi and Urdu were main issues of public controversy. In 1940, Sachitanand Hirananda Agyeya and Chaudhuri Hassan Hasrat were appointed to prepare an authoritative lexicon for *Hindustani* news broadcast. The process took five years. By then, a separate broadcast for Hindi and Urdu were about to start. Hence, *Hindustani* lost its cause[65]. The Partition of India killed whatever little chance *Hindustani* had to become languge of India. One of the members of the constituent assembly of India, K. Santhanam believed that "If there had been no Partition, *Hindustani* would without doubt have been the national language but the anger against the Muslims turned against Urdu[66]."

Hindi, Urdu , and Identity in Post-Colonial India

In the Partition-related violence, around 12–15 million people were forced to migrate and sought refuge in various parts of India and Pakistan, more than one million were killed[67], and approximately 75,000 women were abducted and raped[68]. Many Hindus remained in Pakistan despite the religion-based violence, while several Muslims opted for India. In India, the state adopted the principal of secularism but a larger section of society remains non-accommodative to such constitutional values. As a result, India has witnessed several communal violence after independence. In independent India, as Hilal Ahmed writes, *Muslim questions* transformed into *Muslim issues*, and also "envisaged as *problems*[69]." Ahmed further writes:[70]

> This dominant imagination of Muslim political identity fits very well with different political ideologies. For instance, the Congress and other so-called secular parties use the portrayal of *pukka* Musalman to nurture their' protection of minority' agenda, while the BJP (and the erstwhile Bharatiya Jana Sangh!) employ this Muslimness strategically to consolidate and strengthen their core Hindutva constituency. Competitive electoral politics reproduces these fixed images of 'Muslims as political community' and we are left with a strange and somehow stupid question: *Can a Muslim be an Indian?*

Although the Indianness of Indian Muslims is being questioned, some attention have been paid toward the Urdu language. To look at the status of Urdu and for its advancement, in 1972, a committee headed by Inder Kumar Gujral (who later became the prime minister of India in 1997–98) was set up. The Committee submitted its report in 1975 and gave 187 recommendations to support Urdu language in India[71]. Years later, to examine the recommendations of the Gujral Committee a subcommittee under Ahmad Suroor was set up in 1979 which submitted its report in 1983. Later, the Ali Sardar Jafari Committee was set up in February 1990. In its September 1990 report, Jafri committee found that the Government of India had not implemented most of the recommendations by the Gujral committee[72].

Political importance of any language depends upon the number of people who read, write, and speak it. Numerically, according to the 2011 Language Census of India, Hindi is the mother tongue of about 52,83,47,193 people[73]. This number includes the people who speak different dialects such as Awadhi, Bhojpuri, etc. Primarily, the Hindi-speaking population is concentrated in north India. On the other hand, the Urdu-speaking population is not merely confined to North India or in the Indo-Gangetic plains, it is also a mother tongue of a sizable number of populations in Karnataka (10%), Maharashtra (7.5%), and Andhra Pradesh (8.5%)[74]. Sachar Committee Report 2006 titled *"Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India: A Report,"* prepared under Justice (retd) Rajinder Sachar, found that the number of students enrolled in the Urdu medium school in Uttar Pradesh is dismally low. In Bihar and Jharkhand also, the number of students' enrollment

was not satisfactory while Karnataka (4410), Maharashtra (3443), and Andhra Pradesh (2569) have a large number of governments-run or government-aided Urdu medium schools with a substantial number of students enrolling in these schools[75]. However, having a satisfactory number of students' enrollment does not mean that the schools have all the essential infrastructure required to be a complete school. A study carried out by the Center for Peace Studies in 2014 points out that many of such government-run Urdu medium primary schools, do not have proper electricity, lack drinking water facilities, and are run in rented rooms[76]. Also, most of them do not have Urdu teachers. The posts have been vacant for many years[77].

Rise of Hindu nationalism and Hindutva in the 1980s led to resurrection of debates on the Mughals, Muslims as foreigners, and Muslims' loyalty to India. Muslim rulers had subjugated and exploited the Hindus during their reign, according to the proponents of Hindutva politics. They also firmly believe that Urdu is a "foreign" language associated with Islam. The Mughals are portrayed as villains who have no respect for Hindu culture, including the language. Audre Truschke's work shows that the Mughal rulers, especially since Akbar (1556–1605), had many Sanskrit texts translated into Persian and had recruited many Sanskrit scholars in their courts[78]. This was not necessarily because of their secular approach but rather to understand the society over which they were ruling[79].

Further, two important developments of the period which have strong bearings on the Hindu-Muslim relations were: the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992 and the Pakistan-backed militancy in the Kashmir valley since 1989. In the late 1980s, the BJP extended political support to the agitation led by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and other Hindu outfits to build Hindu god lord Rama's temple at a place where Babri mosque was standing. The movement attracted a large section of Hindu middle class towards the right-wing politics. This was, as mentioned above, reflected in the electoral performance of the BJP in the parliamentary and state-level elections. From two seats in the Union parliament in 1984, the BJP won 120 seats in the 1991 general elections. The BJP-led coalition government came into power for 13 days in 1996, and then in 1998–1999, and again from 1999 to 2004.

More powerful than earlier, in 2014, the BJP won the majority number of seats in the parliamentary elections under the leadership of Narendra Modi, under whose chief ministership communal riots occurred after several Hindus were burnt to death at Godhra in Gujarat in 2002. The BJP was reelected to power in 2019, winning more number of seats than 2014. Modi is accused for leading India toward the majoritarianism. Majoritarian nationalism is effusively supported by the society and state equally[80]. In theory and practice, majoritarian nationalism is widely believed to be a bad form of nationalism for two reasons[81]. First, this form of nationalism asserts the superiority of the majority community and its dominance over minorities. Assertion of

superiority and dominance of majority alienates the minorities. Second, majoritarian nationalism chiefly believes in aligning political, religious, or linguistic borders, which is unrealistic in the present world[82]. Majoritarian nationalism is largely whipped by populist leaders who are usually authoritarian. Such populist authoritarian leaders claim to represent people who can only be from a single group, there is no room for pluralism[83]. For critics and many members of opposition parties, some of the policy decisions of Modi's Government epitomize bias against religious minorities. One such decision is Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) introduced in 2019. It has a provision to give citizenship to persecuted minorities, except Muslims, from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh. The CAA is largely seen by those protesting against it as a shield to the Hindus whose names were missing from the final list of the updated National Register of Citizen in Assam[84].

Correspondingly, late 1980s also witnessed rise of militancy in the Indian-side of Jammu & Kashmir and in many other parts of the world. The Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) was one of the early militant groups established in the Kashmir valley, followed by Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, whose leader Muhammad Yusuf Shah *alias* Syed Salahuddin was defeated by rigging the 1987 elections in favor of a candidate from the National Conference, Ghulam Mohiuddin Shah[85]. Salahuddin later found shelter and support from the Pakistani agencies. Years of militancy in the Kashmir valley and a series of militant attacks by the Pakistan-based militant groups on Indian soil such as the Mumbai attack in 2008, etc., further portrayed the community as a villain in the eyes of several Hindus. Earlier after the militant attack in the US in September 2001, many of the Hindus have turned as narcissistic compassionate[86] and supported the US invasion of Afghanistan and other Muslim countries.

To please its Hindu constituency, in 2019, the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance government revoked the Special Status granted to the Indian side of J&K under Article 370 of the Indian constitution. Revocation of article 370 has been a part of the BJP's political manifesto since Bhartiya Jan Sangh days[87]. The Government argues that after revocation of Special Status, J&K would become democratic and experience growth. However, those who do not buy this logic argue that it would further alienate a significant number of Kashmiris.

Besides the rise of Hindutva politics and its reflection on the Indian television screens, there had been also a decline in the influence of the traditional Muslim social elites which has affected the further spread and growth of syncretic culture and mixed language. For example, the Hindi film industry, where Urdu language was significant until the 1980s[88] started adopting the language spoken by the people on the street to become more reflective of the society. Another trend the film industry adopted since the 1990s is to showcase the Indian diaspora's stories. The language it used for this is simple Hindi or Punjabi Hindi as most of the stories such films narrated on the screen are of

Hindu Punjabis[89]. Post-1990s, the sanskritized Hindi has also been used but more on television screens. Besides, a large section of the Muslim social elites and Middle-class, like their Hindu counterparts, prefer English over Urdu.

Although a strong proponent of Hindi-Hindu-Hindustan, the BJP has used Urdu for electoral purpose and to reach to the Muslim groups whom they feel can be attracted toward the party. For example, before the 2012 municipal corporation elections in Delhi, the party promised to open Urdu medium schools in the neighborhoods dominated by Muslims. A BJP leader, Vani Tripathi, stated, "There was an urgent need to focus on the poor literacy rate among Muslims. For students with an Urdu background, there has always been a demand to provide them education in the language they are comfortable with. If we are voted back to power, we'll open more Urdu medium schools inwards where Muslims have a significant presence[90]." In that election, the party also published its campaign material in the Urdu language for the Muslim populated regions of Delhi[91]. Likewise, before the 2014 parliamentary elections, an Urdu version of the BJP's prime mistrial candidate Narendra Modi's official website was launched in Mumbai by popular script writer of Hindi films, Salim Khan. After the website's launch, Modi thanked Salim Khan, while the BJP said "It is also one of the many technology-oriented initiatives taken towards putting across his (Modi) views to people across the borders and his focus on soliciting their views for the nation[92]." Again, before the 2015 assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, a hotbed of Hindu-Muslim politics, the BJP published pamphlets in Urdu counting the achievements of the Modi government at the Center. About those pamphlets, the BJP's national in-charge for minority wing Abdul Rasheed Ansari said that they would help the party "to connect with the people belonging to certain communities and regions in a more 'affectionate manner' … will reach out to the Muslim community and tell them about works that the Narendra Modi government has done for the growth of entire nation and all communities in the past one year[93]." Despite all, the Muslims vote to the BJP has remained dismal. For example, in the 2022 UP assembly elections, against the general perception, eight percent of Muslims voted for the BJP[94].Also, Modi government had allocated a budget of Rs 332.76 crores for the National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL) during 2014–19. This is more than the United Progressive Alliance-2 government which allocated merely Rs 176.48 crores[95].

Like the BJP, Rashtriya Swamsevak Sangh (RSS) has also maintained ambiguity over the issue of Urdu. At the 6th World Urdu conference, senior RSS leader Indresh Kumar said that his organization intends to keep the "mili-juli tehzeeb" (syncretic culture) alive in India[96]. In 2021, RSS chief, Mohan Bhagwat's book "Bhavishya Ka Bharat" written in Hindi was translated in Urdu as "Mustaqbil ka Bharat" by Shaikh Aqil Ahmad director of NCPUL[97]. It is seen as an effort from the RSS to reach to the Muslim community. The book launch was at the NCPUL where, as reported, all staff were asked to attend the

function. The circular in this regard reads "... all officers/staff (regular/contract) will compulsorily attend the function on scheduled date and time except those on approved leave or on other acceptable reason[98]."

Both BJP and RSS can rule India by promoting Hindi only, so why they are interested in Urdu is an important question. One possible reason for this is both want to control the language to push their narratives about religion and country through Urdu. For instance, the RSS and BJP narratives believe that the ancestors of the South Asian Muslims were Hindus who were forcefully converted into Islam by the Muslim raiders in medieval India. Second, the fundamentalist Muslims cut *Bharat Mata* to create Pakistan. In short, through a control on Urdu the BJP and RSSs' objective is to promote a Hinduized version of Islam and fiercely argue in favor of changing their individual, social and political identity. The CAA is an example of, what many says in India, attack on political identity of the Indian Muslims, while the raising an issue of banning wearing of hijab as a part of uniform is looked as targeting individual's cultural and religious identity.

Despite such support, discrimination against Urdu , as many scholars observe, continues. Mahmood Farooqui observes "You had a lot of Hindu nationalists and Hindu fundamentalists saying Urdu created Pakistan, so let's ban it ... (Earlier also) There was a lot of discrimination against it in schools, the Government did nothing to propagate it, or to help its cause. And that continues to be the state of affairs today[99]." Further, in 2016, the NCPUL introduced a form requiring authors of books to declare annually that the content will not be against the Government or the country[100].

Like growing Sanskritisation of Hindi, there is criticism for growing Arabfication/Arabization of the Urdu language. There is an increase in use words, such as *Ramdan* (fasting), which is more popularly used than *Ramzan* (fasting), *Allah Hafiz* (good bye) and not *Khuda Hafiz* (good bye), etc[101]. On the contrary, Rizwan Ahmed argues that Ramzan-Ramdan controversy is not related to influence of radical Islam or Wahabism on Urdu language. It is, instead, due to the globalization of language, its use and meanings. There is a linguistic "cross fertilisation" that gives birth to new linguistic forms[102]. Most of such mix up of use of words is by the population with link to the Middle East Asia. However, as my conversation with several common people in Mumbai show, the majority in India speak the language spoken in their region.

Language of the common people

As the Hindi-Urdu divide remains after 74 years of the Partition, I did short fieldwork in Mumbai, India, to know what language(s) common people speak. I spoke to a selected number of people from outside of Mumbai on my mobile phone. Most of the Hindus I talked to in Mumbai and from other

north Indian cities informed me that besides their regional language, they speak Hindi. I have interacted with many Tamil, Telugu, Malayali, Kannadiga, and Telangana Hindus. They speak their regional language and prefer English as a link language with North Indians, though some living in cities majority of them, such as Mumbai, etc., for years speak Hindi comfortably. Similar feeling was shared by the Bengalis, people living in Tripura, Assamese, and Odia Hindus with whom I talked. People from Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Sikkim, with whom I have interacted in the last ten year,also prefer English as a link language.

Interestingly, speaking Hindi does not mean one can also read and write the language. For example, some of the Bengali and Odia Hindus, I talked, told me that they can speak Hindi but could not read and write the language. It is worth mentioning that most of the non-North Indian Hindus I interacted with named their regional language and not Hindi as their mother tongue. Many north Indian Hindus, however, call Hindi their mother tongue. In this paper, I am mentioning only my Muslim respondents' response because the Hindus I talked to give me a response to the lines I mentioned in the above sentences. Some of the respondents' and interviewees'names have been changed in the text to maintain anonymity.

On December 19, 2021, I met Sajid, an autorickshaw driver, who lives in Ghatkopar in Mumbai. He was originally from Uttar Pradesh but born and brought up in Mumbai. He said that he speaks Marathi with his Maharashtrian friends, while at home he talks with his family members in Hindi. He said, Hindi is his mother tongue. Next day, Mohamad Shamim who was from Gonda district in Uttar Pradesh and lives in a slum in Cama Estate in Goregaon East told me that he speaks Hindi with his family members.

Near iconic Prithvi Theater in Juhu Tara road, Mumbai, I met Wajiullah on December 21, 2021. He was from Faizabad district in Uttar Pradesh. He lives in Sakinaka. Wajiullah told me that he reads *Roznama Sahara*. On the day, I met him, he could not get a copy of *Sahara* so was reading *Urdu Times Daily*. Interestingly, he could not differentiate between Hindi and the language he was speaking with me. When I asked, in which language he talks with his family members, he said the same language he was talking to me. He was speaking Hindi with heavy Awadhi accent. He could read Hindi and Urdu comfortably. He reads Urdu newspapers because Urdu press reports from all over the world and India, whilst the Hindi newspapers cover only local news.

On 22 December 2021, Umaiyad Ayub, a cab driver told me that he speaks *khichdi* (mix of many) languages in his house. He said that it was difficult for him to acknowledge whether the words he was using were from Urdu, Hindi, Marathi or from other languages. Umaiyad was from Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh. For the last 40 years, he is living in Chembur, Mumbai with his wife.

On December 26, 2021, I talked to Rashid Raina on WhatsApp. Rashid hails from Pahalgam in Anantnag district. He works in Srinagar. He told me that he speaks in Kashmiri with his family members while with others in English or Urdu. For him Urdu is a link language outside of Kashmir. I was speaking in Hindi while he in Urdu. Rashid has learnt Arabic in Darasgah (school/academy) till class 11th. He used to attend Darasgah for one hour every morning and in the evening. After learning the basics of Arabic, he was taught to read Quran Sharif in Arabic. In the mosque, which he attends, Friday sermon is given in Arabic and then translated to Urdu and Kashmiri. But *namaz* is offered in Arabic. Urdu is an official language of Kashmir and compulsory till class tenth in the state government school. This has not changed even after revocation of special status of the Jammu & Kashmir and its demotion to the Union Territory from state in August 2019. In Jammu, a Hindu dominated region, Hindi is taught in the schools. However, Rashid informed me that in the Muslim majority areas in Jammu, such as Poonch, Dora, and Rajouri, Urdu is taught.

Mehru Jafar, a Lucknow-based former journalist, told me that over the last half a century lots of Arabic words have been inserted in Urdu and Hindi has included difficult Sanskritized vocabulary. I exchanged messages with Mehru on 26 and December 27, 2021. She is working on a book on Urdu poets of nineteenth century Lucknow. She told me that language does not have any particular religion. She said that she speaks *Hindustani* like many other people from the region.

On December 27, 2021, I exchanged messages with Salma who lives in Hyderabad with her husband and a small child. She is from Bengaluru. She told me that her mother tongue was Deccani Urdu while her husband, who hails from Madhya Pradesh, identifies Hindi as his mother tongue. Salma talks in Hindi with her husband. She told me that she was fluent in Kanada and could read and write the language. She talks to her Kannadiga friends in Kanada. Despite being her mother tongue, she can hardly read Urdu. Her mother is fluent in Urdu, while her father reads Kanada newspapers.

Conclusion

As discussed in this paper, differences between Hindi and Urdu were essentially a result of the rise of competitive communal politics in British India. King (1989) observes that Hindu-Urdu controversies began in 1860s and continued up to independence of India. Religious identity was forged on the basis of language. The protagonists of the Hindi emphasized on the Sanskritisation by judging the language by the degree to which it incorporated Sanskrit words. Vernacular elites played an active role in this. Hindi was identified with Hinduism while Urdu was propagated as foreign language[103]. As the language separated communities and forged religious identity,

Hindustani was developed in an attempt to unite people, but it did not work. The AIML took up the case of Urdu language while many in Congress fierecely promoted the Hindi language for religious reasons.

In the post-colonial India, the attempt by the Hindi and Hindu nationalists to impose Hindi on non-Hindi speaking regions has been vehemently resisted by the regional political parties[104]. More than Hindi, the emphasis is on the Sanskrit language which the Hindu nationalists feel superior and primary to all other languages spoken in India. The BJP's election manifesto of 2019 categorically stated that "With a focused effort on the promotion of Sanskrit, we will ensure that the teaching of Sanskrit is expanded and popularized at the school level. We will also provide 100 Panini fellowships to researchers and scholars across India to promote research in Sanskrit[105]."

Like colonial India, competitive communal politics and majoritarianism have widen the distance between the Hindus and Muslims. The politics of BJP and some of the policy decisions taken by party led Government at the center and in states since 2014 have alienating impact on several Indian Muslims. Emphasis of government on spread of "Hindu's culture and language" is an attempt to forge religious identity based on language. However, as discussed in the last section of this paper, most of the common people in India speak the language spoken in their region without knowing whether they are speaking Hindi or Urdu.

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Ideological positioning in the representation of borders: an analysis of recent Hindi films

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ABSTRACT

Ideology and cinematic representation are crucially linked even though a film's positioning of itself with respect to dominant state ideology may differ thus contesting the idea that films always serve as ideological state apparatus. In this context, the paper reflects on the complex ways in which the ideological positioning – advertently or inadvertently – of cinematic representations of Partition in Hindi films of the 2000s interacts with dominant state ideology to frame the relationship between self and other with the terms denoting India/Hindu and Pakistan/Muslim, respectively. Through an analysis of the representation of the India–Pakistan border in four films – *Pinjar* (2003), *Veer-Zaara* (2004), *Uri: The Surgical Strike* (2019) and *Kya Dilli Kya Lahore* (2014) – the paper argues that mainstream Hindi films are largely reflective of the state ideology, although to varying degrees and at times in spite of themselves. In contrast, a low-budget film as *Kya Dilli Kya Lahore* completely subverts the dominant ideology through its sensitive but incisive critique of the border.

Introduction

In *Camera Politica*, arguing that cinematic representations do not take place in vacuum, outside socio-political contextual frameworks, Michael Ryan and Douglas Kellner say:

> The political stakes of film are thus very high because film is part of a broader system of cultural representation which operates to create psychological dispositions that result in a particular construction of social reality, a commonly held sense of what the world is and ought to be that sustains social institutions.[1]

Kellner, further, adds that the specific political position is dependent as much on form as on narrative. However, he warns that instead of treating all films as apparatuses of promoting a dominant state ideology, they should be viewed as a "contested terrain" that represent on screen a specific perspective of important conflicts within society.[2] In the Indian context, Madhav Prasad elucidates the "ideological imperative"[3] of mainstream Hindi cinema in its pre-Bollywood phase where the audience – unlike in Hollywood – is placed outside the process of creation of meaning. As Vasudevan explains, "here this authority sticks out, relaying an address to the spectator from the Symbolic

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Order, the overall source of meaning in society."[4] This does not imply, however, that the spectator remains forever trapped in the dominant ideology relayed by the film. The way out is in "modern methods of narration and realist imaginative practices."[5]

In this context, the paper reflects on the complex ways in which the ideological positioning – advertently or inadvertently – of cinematic representations of Partition in Hindi films of the 2000s interacts with dominant state ideology[6] to frame the relationship between self and other with the terms denoting India/Hindu and Pakistan/Muslim, respectively. Following Gyanendra Pandey,[7] the paper approaches Partition not as an event of a historical past, rather a process whose ramifications continue to be felt in the existence of borders. The films selected for the study are *Pinjar* (2003) directed by Dr Chandrprakash Dwivedi, *Veer-Zaara* (2004) directed by Yash Chopra, *Uri: The Surgical Strike* (2019) directed by Aditya Dhar and *Kya Dilli Kya Lahore* (2014) directed by Vijay Raaz. Based on an analysis of these films' response to the India-Pakistan border, we argue that Hindi films' reflection of the state ideology is contingent upon the legacies of the filmic traditions they adhere to and the socio-political moment of their production. We conclude that mainstream Hindi films are largely reflective of the state ideology, although to varying degrees and at times in spite of themselves. In contrast, an independent film as *Kya Dilli Kya Lahore* subverts the dominant ideology through its sensitive but incisive critique of the border that perceives nationality in terms of religious identity.

Partition, nation, representation

Hindi cinema, like other forms of art, responded to the watershed event of Partition as early as 1948–49 with movies like *Aag* (1948), *Lahore* (1949) and *Apna Desh* (1949). Talking of *Lahore*, M.K.Raghavendra notes that the violence of Partition riots and physical trauma remains off screen, relayed to the audience through soundtrack and a voiceover that narrates, "There was darkness all around."[8] He further adds that instead of treating the event as one with momentous consequence, in the film it serves only to function as a before and after, and it is in non-engagement with the event in its own right that the film signifies the incomprehensibility of the experience of Partition. With the exception of the few films in the initial years of Partition, not many ventured into the subject. Manoj Sharma traces this to state policies that restrain filmmakers from dealing with sensitive areas.[9]

However, the futility of repressing memories of Partition became clear when the specter returned in violent communal riots following the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984 and in the riots in 1990 (Hyderabad), 1992 (following the demolition of the Babri Masjid) and 2002 (Gujarat). The 1990s saw a resurgence in cinema's interest in the Partition. Bollywood Box

Office saw a release of films that either dealt directly with Partition or featured it as an absence presence, animating the plot of the films: *Earth* (1999), *Border* (1997), *Gadar* (2001), *LOC: Kargil* (2003), etc. *Tamas* (1988), a television film adapted from Bhisham Sahni's novel (1974) of the same name was broadcast as a mini-series on Doordarshan. Bhaskar Sarkar argues that the interactions between seemingly opposed phenomenon of globalization and religious nationalism is of particular importance in understanding mass media's obsessive return to a defining historical moment in the past. The homogenizing tendency of globalization ironically also results in the resurgence of ethnic or religious nationalism as it "allows large segments of national populations – whose lives have been, in the main, adversely affected by globalising forces – to hold on to the possibility, real or chimera, of political agency."[10] This is true of the Indian situation where the opening up of India's "relatively insular ... national televisual cultural"[11] and increased international reach of its cinema following economic liberalization in 1991 corresponds to the resurfacing around the same time of religious nationalism. This emergent brand of nationalism was structured around Hindutva ideology, which equated the essence of Indianness with an orthodox, masculine Hindu identity. The return of Partition films in such a backdrop implied that they subscribed to logic of past as a marketable commodity while also being complicit in furthering the nationalist ideal.

This is also the time when, to use Rajashyaksha's word, "Bollywoodization" of Hindi cinema takes place.[12] Though used to refer commonly to the Hindi popular cinema, Bollywood as a term does not necessarily eschew art or independent films; rather it relates more to a certain mood, treatment of theme and a mode of presentation.[13] In addition, two inter-related developments are discernible in the Bollywood phase that highlight Hindi cinema's changing role vis-à-vis the state. First, the primary target audience shifts to the diasporic Indian population. This entails a shift, Prasad argues, from Urdu to English as the metalanguage of Hindi cinema, one that holds the multiple languages of India that Hindi cinema treats as one, and in which alone the national ideology can be expressed. Second, while the post-Independence Hindi cinema, under the control of the state, served as an important medium of forging a post-colonial, national identity, with the Bollywood turn of the 1990s there is a rise in cultural nationalism – "a rather freer form of civilizational belonging explicitly delinked from the political rights of citizenship, indeed delinked even from the State itself."[14]

The analyses that follows addresses this distinction between Hindi and Bollywood cinema and the heterogeneity of film traditions in general. Further, the thematic analyses reflects the shifting political terrains of Indo-Pak relations.

Re-interpreting the nation through adaptation: *Pinjar* (2003)

An adaptation of Amrita Pritam's novel (1950)[15] of the same name, Dr Chandraprakash Dwivedi's *Pinjar* appeared in 2003. The novel traced the life of Puro, the daughter of a wealthy family from Punjab who is abducted by Rashida, a Shaikh, as her wedding preparations are underway. The act carried out at the behest of Rashida's uncle was meant to avenge the loss of the Shaikh's honor. Subsequently shunned by her family Puro is married to Rashida, is conferred the new identity of Hamida, now a Muslim, and continues to live with him in Sakkar. The narration proceeds as Puro during her stay in Sakkar forges bonds with other traumatized women and finally culminates in the tragedy of Partition when violence on an unprecedented scale was unleashed on women. One such woman, Puro learns, is Lajo–Ramchand's sister and her brother's wife. With Rashida's help, Puro manages to save Lajo from her abductor and return her to her family, though she herself chooses to stay in Pakistan. Broadly speaking, thus, the novel addressed the trauma of women abducted both before and after the Partition to highlight patriarchal codes of honor and critique nationalist accounts of women's abduction that linked it to women's communal identity. Pritam argued that while abduction of women was an embodiment of patriarchal rather than communal identities, their restoration was an attempt to allay these anxieties by reinstating women in their *legitimate* (emphasis mine) space of the family.

The trauma that returns in the cinematic adaption, however, performs a function widely different from the novel, thereby illustrating the manner in which groups and communities appropriate collective trauma toward specific ends.[16] The film's belated project of mourning the trauma of Partition, even while being aware of the gendered dimension of trauma, posits the question of gender vis-à-vis the idea of a nation imagined as a masculine entity. Depicting women's trauma of abduction in the backdrop a benevolent patriarchy where the male is posited as the protector, *Pinjar* dilutes the novel's essentially female point of view through a clearly discernible male point of view narrative. Through an extension of the benevolence of the patriarchal nation state, the film establishes parallels between the microcosm of the protagonists' world and macrocosmic nation, moving from one to the other through representative characters such as Ramchand. However, the image of the nation – and of nationalism – so conceived is, on the face, that of a secular state and yet is subtly tied to the rising tide of majoritarian Hindutva ideology. This can be understood by reading the representation of Rashid alongside the two other main male characters – Trilok and Ramchand.

Before moving into the said discussion it is pertinent to note that as a film, *Pinjar* carries the legacy of the New Wave/Parallel Cinema of the late 1960s-1980s that bolstered by the financial support from The Film Finance Corporation (FCC) provided an alternative to popular cinema and was

targeted at the urban, educated middle class. The FCC's decision in 1969 to finance "offbeat" films such that cinema become a medium of promoting national culture, however, came as a culmination of a decade-long initiative by the Indian government that "good cinema" be made, with the term referring to the two-pronged criteria laid by Marie Seton, "(a) when it presents an important social or political theme, and (b) when it is nationally true to the country where it is created." Even with a popular star cast, particularly Urmila Matondkar and Manoj Bajpayee, and the many songs in tradition of mainstream movies, the seriousness of the theme and its currency to the Indian nation brings *Pinjar* close to Seton's definition that, in a way, was the driving force behind the rise of Parallel cinema. Furthermore, in the deployment of film realism also *Pinjar* harks back to the tradition of Parallel cinema. It is also pertinent to note that the film's music was released at the Wagah border in the presence of the team including the lead actress, Urmila Matondkar. Finally, to read the text of *Pinjar* in comparison to another adaptation of a Partition novel – Bapsi Sidhwa's *Cracking India* adapted as *Earth* (1998) by Deepa Mehta – explains why *Pinjar* veers toward the pre-Bollywood phase of Hindi cinema. Much like *Pinjar, Earth* draws upon the convention of song and dance, and has a popular star – Aamir Khan – in the lead. However, the use of both Hindi and English as the language of the film clearly indicates that the diasporic Indian director was catering to primarily to a Western audience in the tradition of Bollywood movies. *Pinjar*, on the other hand, is made for the native viewer as is suggested by the use of a Hindi heavily inflected with Punjabi. It can therefore be argued that while the resort to mainstream conventions allowed Dwivedi to announce his project as a mainstream film and thus reach a larger audience, the shadow of the Parallel cinema lent to it a seriousness that helped maintain a distance from mere commercialism. It is in light of the film's placement in this middle ground that the subtlety of the thematic shift needs to be understood.

Pinjar opens with a sketch of a *kafila*, foot convoys comprising thousands of people, an image that has been entrenched in the cultural memory of Partition as a symbol of its violence and trauma. This is followed, at the end of the film's opening credits, by a voiceover that narrates:

> It is an old story. The monsoon of 1946 was wreaking havoc in the nation. The nation's courtyards (*aangan*) and common hearths (*saanjhe chulhe*) were on the brink of getting divided. Under the dying embers lay hidden sparks of fire. If the nation was already on fire somewhere, it was on the verge of being on fire elsewhere. Punjab too was not untouched. This was just the beginning of the Partition.

The voiceover at once establishes a temporal distance from the historical event of Partition and scripts it as a nation's trauma. By dividing its courtyards and hearths, symbols that convey the idea of home, the event not just ruptured the fabric of the nation but also fragmented its association with home and the

related feeling of being at home. At the outset itself, the film in its return to the traumatic event of Partition, announces its preoccupation with the nation. It is against this overarching discourse of the nation that the narrative of women's trauma is played out. However, concurrent with Sarkar's argument, the idea of nation that *Pinjar* conjures is masculine, drawing upon the tenets encoded in Hindutva ideology.

The film's deliberate choice of setting the beginning in August 1946 thus becomes significant. While it might be argued that limiting the temporal span of the film is a restraint imposed by the genre, it nevertheless enables the creation of an atmosphere where Partition is an imminent threat. The spectacle of violence presented in the opening scene where a mob of Muslim rioters attacks a peaceful procession of Sikhs, the voiceover that follows – "This was just the beginning of Partition" – and carefully placed dialogues all betray the future of an impending Partition. Therefore, while the temporal gap between Puro's abduction and the event of Partition allows Pritam to frame the novel as a critique of gender relations, of which the extraordinary circumstance of Partition is a reflection, in reducing this gap to exactly a year, the film subtly shifts the resonance away from gender, placing it in the larger discourse of nation. In the altered circumstances, the tale of vendetta too comes to be tinged with communalism such that the emphasis shifts from the politics of gender to the politics of religious identities in the service of the nation.

We are told that the enmity between Shahs and Shaikhs dates back to decades. Back in the days when the Shahs were moneylenders, the Shaikhs had been unable to repay their dues as a result of which not only had the Shahs acquired their house but also Puro's uncle had abducted Rashida's aunt. He had kept her for three days after which he returned her back to the Shaikhs. To avenge the dishonor brought to their clan, the Shaikhs tasked Rashida with abducting Puro days before her marriage. He resisted their decision arguing that it would be unfair to punish her for the wrongdoings of her family, but partly under pressure of ridicule and partly from his love for Puro, he abducts her. Regarding Rashida's portrayal in the film, Roshni Sengupta has rightly noted, "This is the point at which *Pinjar* – more in line with Amrita Pritam's eponymous story, posits a complete antithesis to the Hindu right's discourse on the violation of Hindu women by wanton Muslim men [. . .] the characterization of Rashid is a source of subliminal atonement for the narrative."[17] Indeed, following the abduction, he takes utmost care of Puro, rubbing her hands and feet to bring her into consciousness. Despite her warning that her family would not take her back, when Puro escapes only to be shunned away, he does not stop her instead waits by the well and finally brings her back home. In Sakkar as a married couple, Puro justifiably has an ambivalent relationship with him. As her perpetrator and the cause of her trauma, she is unable to forgive him or allow him access to her emotions. The news of her pregnancy only brings her disgust as it serves as a reminder of her trauma. Yet they

peacefully go about their daily life with Rashida supporting her in her decisions as in when she decides to adopt the madwoman's son. Rashida demonstrates an understanding of her trauma, silently repenting each day for his mistakes. When he is informed that the person who set fire to his crops could likely be Puro's brother, he defends him saying that it was a natural reaction of a brother whose sister had been abducted. Rashida's guilt is finally assuaged to an extent when he helps Puro rescue Ramchand's sister Lajo who is abducted by a Muslim during Partition riots.

However, even as the spectator is presented with a sensitive portrayal of Rashida, the narrative is placed alongside that of a benevolent Hindu patriarchy, an extension of the benevolence that the nation would come to stand for later in the course of the film. By thus foregrounding patriarchy's protector role, particularly through the characters of Trilok and Ramchand, the film shifts the novel's essentially female point of view to a male point of view. In a way, the shift also converges with the Indian state's point view about abducted women. The significantly higher screen time accorded to Trilok and Ramchand as opposed to a rather limited narrative space in the novel is important in this regard. All major episodes in the lives of Puro and Lajo – the two lead female characters in the film – are interspersed by their reflection, in dialogue or through affectual import so that in addition to the narrative of women's abduction and resultant trauma, an equally dominant narrative thread of the Hindu male response to their trauma is clearly discernible. Both the strands culminate in the climax of the film.

After Puro's abduction, Mohanlal – her father – decides to seek the help of both law and religious leaders until just in time Aslam, Rashida's cousin, appears at his doorstep to summon him to the Shaikhs' house where Rashida's uncle reminds him of the past injustice and threatens him to remain silent. If he were to take any action against them not only would they spread slander about Puro but might also put the honor of his other daughters in jeopardy who could be similarly abducted. Despite the threats, he pleads to the Shaikhs to return his daughter; that he would even debase himself before them if only they returned Puro. Ignoring his entreaties, they push him out of the house as he continues pleading. Walking back home with slouched shoulders and grim face that betray his pain he pauses shortly in the dark, empty lane where he breaks into tears. When he reaches home, he tells his wife, "Your Puro is gone. You Puro is dead," and lapses into tears again. Later in response to Trilok urging to file a complaint with the police, he retorts in anguish, "Do you think I am my daughter's enemy?"

Whereas in the novel, Puro's family's attempt to find her is only told in reported speech, the film's portrayal of the episode at length becomes important to further the narrative of male point of view, highlighting their role as protector. Mohan Lal's decisions to terminate the search for Puro, send her back when she manages to escape and get Rajjo married in her place (although

to Ramchand's cousin) are framed in light of his fear of the misfortune that might befall his other daughters and of death, not just his own but also of his kinsmen. He is mindful not just of the moral codes that govern society but also of the prevailing atmosphere of rising religious antagonism given the time in which the film is set. The episode at Sheikh's house achieves the twin purpose of moderating his guilt of giving up his daughter for family honor and safety, and of covertly indicating the aggression of the Shaikhs. Thus, through the entire episode, Mohan Lal becomes the helpless patriarch, doing all he can to save his family and thus worthy of sympathy.

Trilok, however, never ceases to search for his beloved sister. Before Puro with the rest of family had left for Chatto, he had made her promise that she would not marry in his absence. Along with sentimental music playing in the background, Trilok's words and Puro's leave taking of him achieves a sinister foreboding of the disaster that was to come. Upon reaching Chatto when he learns of Puro's abduction, he has an intense argument with his father regarding lodging a police complaint to initiate a search. It is only after her mother's appeal and his father's assurance that he may resume the search after the marriages, that with a heavy-heart, he temporarily suspends his efforts. As the film progresses, his endeavors to locate and bring back his sister form a sub plot as important as the main plot. Even at the cost of his father's ire and a strained relationship with his wife Lajo, he seeks help from senior officials, gathering any piece of information he can. He urges Rajjo to tell him anything she might know. Finally, unable to find Rashida and consumed by the fire of revenge, he sets his fields on fire.

If the film presents the benevolent face of the state through the benevolent Hindu male patriarchy albeit though a seeming espousal of secular nationalist values, Ramchand is an embodiment of these values. Presented in the very first scene as a true Gandhian, he espouses secular and socialist values. We are told that he insists on teaching in the village in spite of having a job offer from Lahore College, is translating Valmiki's Ramayana into Urdu and plans to translate Ghalib's poems into Sanskrit. For him, Valmiki, Kalidas and Ghalib belong to the same faith, that of voicing the truth of their respective societies. The spectator first meets Ramchand engrossed in *riyaaz* with his sister Lajo, in presence of their music teacher who is a Muslim. They sing of Sita's *agnipariksha* – the test of fire to ascertain her purity – as Ramchand, through the song's lyrics, expresses unease with Lord Rama's silence regarding Sita's ordeal. Drawing upon the cultural myth of *vanvaas* (literally, stay in forest) and Sita's *agnipariksha*, the song's significance will gradually unfold as the film progresses. In another conscious departure from the novel that serves the film's project of religious nationalism, Ramchand choses to remain unmarried until he finds his "Janki," and thus remains worthy of his name. The myth of Sita, in fact, helms the narrative of women's abduction both before and after Partition. *Vanvaas* becomes a motif that signifies a traumatic separation from

husband/beloved. Reliance on the myth of Sita's abduction functions both as a narrative device that suggests the trans-historical trauma of the ontological category of "woman," and frames the discourse of Partition within the Hindu cultural tradition whereby Indian men, in the spirit of Lord Ram, must bring back their abducted wives and daughters from the enemy's land – Pakistan – and accept them into their lives. Thus, a dichotomy is established between India as the protector and Pakistan as the aggressor.

Butalia, and Menon and Bhasin note the invocation of Sita's myth of abduction in parliamentary debates while passing the Abducted Person's (Recovery and Restoration) Bill (1949) that was meant to recover women abducted during Partition. The Act, despite its noble intentions, however, curtailed any agency of abducted women. Menon and Bhasin argue that importance laid on the project of bringing back abducted women and the place in this discourse of the myth from Ramayan indicates the presence of two traditions: "a tradition-in-the-making of responsible government, secular principles and democratic practice [. . .] and an ancient Hindu "tradition" of chivalry toward women and fierce protection of their honor."[18] They also argue that in this context it was necessary to negate values of a shared Hindu-Muslim past. An attempt was also made to distance "' 'civilised,' secular', 'Hindu India [. . .] from 'irresponsible,' 'communal' Muslim Pakistan."[19]

The film's engagement with abduction through allusions to Sita myth converges with the state's logic to recover abducted women, legitimized using mythological references to the *Ramayana*. By echoing the state's benevolent nationalist gesture, the film becomes complicit in furthering a discourse where the variable of gender gains significance only in relation to the national that is itself predicated on the dominant construction of the Hindu male. In understanding the narrative of male point of view in the final sequence, it is also important to study Ramchand's character in some detail. In proposing to accept Puro as his wife, Ramchand resolves the unease he felt while singing of Sita's *agnipariksha*. He does not demand an *agnipariksha* even though she has stayed with another man for over a year. Marking a departure from the novel, Puro's character is molded to make her suitable for the ideal Ramchand. She loses both her biological and adopted children, the first in a stillbirth and the second when Hindus of the village claim the madwoman's son as belonging to the Hindu community. Each of these episodes also serve a dual purpose. While a stillbirth symbolizes the futility of Hindu-Muslim union, the film eschews religious hypocrisy by eliminating the episode where Hindus return the mad woman's son to Puro on the brink of his death. Throughout the film, Puro and Ramchand's relationship is presented in the shadow of the mythic Ram and Sita. Even as the film nears its end, in a carefully placed question Lajo asks Puro, "Do you still love my brother?" Puro refuses to answer her question but in the final scene, she fanatically searches for Rashida, who having atoned

for his sin walks away heavyheartedly so that the long lost lovers might finally unite. Eyes filled with tears, she tells an emotional Rashida, "You are my truth now," thus bringing him catharsis.

The film attempts to present itself as a secular project through the careful placement of scenes that suggest Muslim characters allegiance to a united India. Thus a politician of Muslim faith urges people to not fall prey to the separatist demands of the Muslim League and instead to rally behind Mahatma Gandhi. Contrary to its assumed intention, though, the scene ends up simplistically interpreting the reason behind Partition by creating a dichotomy where the Muslim League stands for a separatist ideology and the Indian National Congress for the dream of a united India. The film resists identification with mainstream Bollywood films like *Gadar* where nationalist jingoism easily translates into well-defined dichotomies between the self and other, an India as representing all that is good versus a Pakistan that represents all things negative. Unlike these films in which the Hindutva ideology's influence on the ideas of nation and nationalism is very well defined, *Pinjar* takes a more nuanced approach. Religious nationalism remains in the film as an undercurrent lurking beneath the surface of representative scenes such as the one mentioned above and the token presence of Muslim characters such as that of the music teacher at Ramchand and Lajo's wedding celebrations.

Ambivalence of borders: *Veer-Zaara* (2004)

The border that is created toward the end of *Pinjar* returns to screen in a plethora of cinematic representations as a reminder of the Partition and its contemporary relevance. Belonging to a category of films that highlight the futility of border politics by emphasizing a shared cultural milieu, *Veer-Zaara* is marked with an ambivalence that contradicts a monochromatic representation of the border.

A quintessential Bollywood movie, *Veer-Zaara* features Shah Rukh Khan, an actor with an unparalleled brand power. While *Veer Zaara* does not feature an NRI protagonist in the manner of other, popular romances like *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* or *Kal Ho Naa Ho*, etc., the trope of a cross-border romance carried a certain appeal as evident in the net overseas of over $8,000,000. Other members of the cast also comprise of some of biggest figures in the industry: Amitabh Bachchan, Hema Malini, Preity Zinta and Rani Mukherjee. The glitz and glamor of a Bollywood film and a narrative of star-struck lovers in the tradition of popular romances of Heer Ranjha, Laila Majnu, etc might serve to deflect attention from the film's ideological standpoint. However, we argue that it is through the employment of conventions of mainstream Bollywood cinema that the film undertakes transgressive acts of border crossing to invoke a mythic space outside of the constraints of border. While the present-day spectator is struck by the ease with which characters in

the film move across the physical border between the two nations, the paper shall explore symbolic border crossing through three conventions: the tradition of romance as exemplified in the relationship of protagonists Veer and Zaara, of cultural symbol of the mother, and the convention of songs.

The film moves between past and present separated by an interval of 22 years during which Veer, an ex-officer in the Indian Air Force is held captive in a jail in Lahore on false charges of being an Indian spy. During all this time, he remains silent, referred only as "prisoner number 786." An auspicious number in Islam assigned to an Indian Hindu, the number itself becomes an act of crossing imposed borders. With the Pakistan government's decision to re-open the cases of some Indian prisoners, Saamiya Sidiqqui (played by Rani Mukherjee) is appointed as his lawyer on behalf of the Human Rights Commission in Pakistan. A young lawyer guided by the principles of truth and justice, she is adamant to help Veer return to his nation. On meeting him for the first time in his prison cell, she chooses to call him by his name – Veer Pratap Singh – instead by a number. From here on the narration moves through flashback as he tells his story of falling in love with a Pakistani girl – Zaara Hayaat Khan – and the subsequent circumstances of his imprisonment. Helmed within the framework of a popular romance, the constant slippages of their world into that of each other provides the film's principal resistance against established borders and boundaries.

At the outset, Zaara's identity is depicted as being shaped by multiple cultural traditions. Brought up in an affluent, well-reputed and honored Islamic household, she is also influenced by Bebe who has been like a second mother to her. Bebe's exact relationship with the Hayaat Khan household is never explained but we come to know that Zaara's grandfather had brought her along with himself at the time of creation of Pakistan in 1947. Since then she continues to live with them but maintains her identity as a Sikh woman. Zaara is shown to accompany her to the *gurudwara* where she pays her obeisance along with her. Further, she goes to Nankana Sahib to bring holy water for Bebe when she is on her deathbed. Before her death, she makes Zaara promise that she would immerse her ashes in Kiritpur, a pilgrimage for Sikhs in India. Explaining the significance she says, "I may be an orphan, but I am an Indian. That is my only identity." Bebe's presence in her life lends a syncretism to Zaara's character that embodies a peaceful reconciliation of contested identities – of Indian and Pakistani, and Sikh and Islamic. This aspect drives her to undertake a journey to India to fulfil Bebe's last wish and marks the beginning of her love story. In India, rescued by Veer after her bus meets with an accident, he helps her get safely to Kiritpur. The journey that takes place through villages amidst a montage of typical scenes of village life rendered hyperbolic through the Bollywood treatment, progresses through the medium of song. A lyric narration of the beauty of India's natural landscape, its customs, traditions and rituals becomes a trope of border crossing not only

because in her participation in the events/actions described in the song, Zaara is integrated into a world that belongs to Veer. More specifically, in the latter part of the song Zaara establishes a continuity between the two nations that limits the border momentarily to a mere geographic marker:

I have seen your country
I have known your country.
I wonder why it seems familiar to me,
It has similar evenings and morning,
My country is just like yours.

As they reach Kiritpur at the end of the song, a reversal occurs when through the symbolic agency of Bebe Veer's world slips into that of Zaara in their combined act of performing the last rites.

Before leaving, Zaara asks Maati (Veer's mother) if she can call him Bebe. It might be argued that in her agreement Bebe becomes a symbol not just of "mother" but also of an inter-cultural shared space inhabited by the lovers. Equally importantly, in this moment the film unites the distinct worlds of the protagonists before they embark on their separate life journeys. Henceforth, their worlds become intertwined with each carrying a part of the other's world even in their separation. This is expressed through the visuals and lyrics of the song that showcases Zaara daydreaming about Veer back in Pakistan. Thus, a line in the song reads, "There are no borders nor any helplessness between us anymore/I am here." Similarly, during the entirety of the time following Zaara's departure for Pakistan with her fiancé Razaa Shiraji, and including in the years in prison, Veer carries her anklet with him. Both Veer and Zaara continue to inhabit the other's world – both symbolically and physically – and devote their lives to fulfilling the responsibilities the other is tasked with. In Pakistan, Veer endures the trauma of imprisonment and loss of identity to protect the honor of Zaara and the Hayat Khan family. In India, Zaara lives in Veer's home, working for the development of the village formed by his father. Significantly, while Zaara is shown speaking Hindi while in Pakistan, now she has taken up Punjabi as was spoken by Veer with his parents.

However, to what extent is it justifiable to assert that the one inhabits the world of the other? With both the protagonists willfully crossing borders to make the other's world their own, does it not imply that their worlds have altered, so to say, or rather that both continue to simultaneously inhabit both worlds? The dilemma is resolved in the following words from the poem that Veer narrates in the courtroom after being absolved of his charges:

I, prisoner number 786, look out of the bars of prison
And see days, months and years evolve into ages.
In this soil I feel the fragrance of my father's farms;
The heat from this sun reminds me of my mother's cool buttermilk;
This rain brings with it my memories of monsoon swings;

This winter reminds me of the warmth of Lohri.
They say, "This is not your country."
Then why does this feel like my country?
They say I am not part of them.
Then why do I feel like a part of them?

The poem that runs into two more stanzas poetically sums up the cultural similarities between the worlds of India and Pakistan and in its lieu implicitly advocates a tradition of healthy border crossing notwithstanding differences of religion or nationality. The courtroom scene concludes with the prosecution lawyer – played by Anupam Kher – appreciating Saamiya with the words that the future of the two nations rests on youth who see beyond religious and national differences and do not invoke the bitter memories of 1947 and subsequent wars between the twin nations.

The year 2004 marked the beginning of the Composite Dialogue Process between the two nations.[20] This optimism that later manifested in the volunteer peacekeeping effort of 'Friends without borders'[21] is visible in *Veer-Zaara* 's narrative of the border. Yet, in spite of the message of hope and harmony sent out through the medium of a Bollywood romance, in the representation of Razaa Shiraazi the film lapses into the very stereotype that plagues Bollywood cinema's stereotypical portrayal of Muslim characters. Razaa, Zaara's fiancé, is first introduced at the Atari railway station where he had come to find her. This is also the first instance in the film when the border is represented on screen and his introductory positioning at the border becomes significant in his framing as the "other," metonymic of his nation, Pakistan. Dressed in typical black *sherwani* and walking with a somber look on his face, accompanied by ominous music, he presents a direct contradiction to the image of Pakistan hitherto conveyed by the cheerful Zaara and her effortless integration in India's world. While this understandably involves a gender perspective, especially Bollywood's construction of female Muslim protagonists, this lies beyond the scope of the present paper. It suffices to say here that Razaa's sudden, unexpected intervention in the narrative accompanied by his demeanor foreshadows his role as the villain. We learn that his alliance with Zaara is political in nature as her father – Jahangir Hayaat Khan – attempts to make advances in politics using the support of Razaa's father. Razaa, then, has a vested interest in marrying her for in future he desires to take up Jahangir's political position as the legitimate heir. Thus, even after knowing about Zaara's love for Veer he does not break the marriage alliance. However, true to the spectator's foreboding he performs the role of a villain. Mindful of the fragile health of Jahangir and the impending loss of honor to the Hayaat Khan family, Veer suggests that Zaara marry Razaa to which she agrees. However, through an abuse of his power and money, Razaa frames Veer in a false case threatening to ruin Zaara's life if he dared to speak the truth. Though it might be argued that the course of events was necessary to further

the plot, it cannot be denied that the portrayal stands true to the accusation that Bollywood frequently misrepresents Muslims as villains. The contrast becomes more glaring when considered alongside a previous conversation between Zaara's mother and Veer where she asks him about his kindhearted nature, "Are all sons in your country like you?"

In addition, Rajinder Dudrah notes that the film' concluding sequence at the Wagah border where Saamiya presents Veer with *sindoor* (vermillion) to make Zaara forever his, results in Zaara being "Hindu-ised"[22] as they then walk into India as their home. He adds, "A dominant reading of this scene, and arguably its intended effect, is one of an ideological climactic resolve that goes against the grain of the fluid pleasures of border crossing and the creation of eclectic borderland spaces demonstrated elsewhere in the film."[23] Though the ideological import of the sequence does not subsume the overall emphasis on cross-cultural continuity, read in tandem with Razaa's portrayal, the film falls short of completely achieving its intended purpose.

Scripting a "New India"- *Uri: The Surgical Strike* (2019)

In contrast to the optimism, however ambivalent, of *Veer-Zaara*, in a spate of Bollywood war films the border appears as the symbolic site of contested identities with border crossing aimed at establishing a purported dominance – both militarily and morally – of self over the other. War films of both phases of Hindi cinema reflect nationalist ideologies for different reasons. While in the pre-Bollywood phase, they reflected the post-independence euphoria, in Bollywood cinema the border becomes the site of jingoistic passion arising, as Sarkar and others have pointed out, from a crisis of identity after globalization. With a benevolent India positioned dichotomously with an aggressive Pakistan, these films reiterate the divisive binaries of Partition.

Uri: The Surgical Strike (2019) – hereafter referred as *Uri* – is a recent addition in the long list of war films. Although a temporal gap of about seven decades separates the events of the film from those in *Pinjar*, we nevertheless hear the echo of otherization that we find in *Pinjar* that is indicative of the similarity of political atmosphere in which they were produced. *Pinjar* and *Uri* both appeared following a period of escalating tension between the two nations due to continuing disputes after the Kargil war (1999) and terrorist attacks on Indian army bases (2016). Devoid of the blatant jingoistic nationalism of much of the war films,[24] *Uri*, nevertheless, becomes a mouthpiece for the dominant right-wing state ideology of a "new India" (*naya Bharat*) where modern scientific knowledge converges with traditional values, through an event that was championed in national media as symbolic of the ethos of new India. Based on the alleged surgical strike carried out on September 29, 2016 by the Indian army across the Line of Control to target militants, *Uri* opens with a note of information that at once underscores the tact and valor of

Indian army and announces its project of depicting a new India. Indeed the strategic use of the term "Surgical Strike" in the film's title as well as in the opening note betrays a complicity with the state given the varied conjectures in global discussion surrounding the apt terminology for describing the said army operation. The content of the note are as follows:

> On September 18, 2016, four terrorists attacked Uri Base Camp, Kashmir, resulting in the death of nineteen unarmed soldiers. On September 29, 2016, the Indian army retaliated by executing one of the *most strategic covert operations ever* (emphasis mine) - a Surgical Strike. This film is a tribute to those men and to all our brave Indian armed forces, and to a *New India* (emphasis mine).

The note alerts the viewer to the tenor of the film and as it progresses, the film becomes in the domain of entertainment a counterpart to the nationalist rhetoric of mainstream news media that in reporting the operation "sustain-[ed] the construction of a fictive 'we,' conflated with the government policies and military strategies, and speaks for a supposedly homogenous national consensus."[25] Furthermore, the film made in the tradition of mainstream, commercial Bollywood cinema had an enormous appeal, both in India and abroad, with a worldwide box office collection of approximately 338 crores.

Major Vihaan Singh Shergill who leads the strike in the film is a decorated officer who had successfully carried out many anti-terrorist operations. However, considering his mother's failing health due to Alzheimer's disease, he decides to take premature retirement to spend time with her. Vasudevan notes that "the spaces of virtue" are the domain of the mother.[26] The reference to his mother and of his desire to tend to her, thus, alludes to Vihaan's virtuous nature and by extension that of India's youth. The prime minister attests to his virtue – "You are a good son" – but in a similar vein also reminds him of his duties toward his nation, "But it also important to protect the nation. She is also our mother, isn't she?" Revisiting Menon and Bhasin's argument, one needs to remember that imagining the nation as a mother implies placing it within the majoritarian Hindutva ideology where it is the responsibility of the sons to protect mother India. Much like in *Pinjar*, then, the discourse of new India that *Uri* develops is framed within the broader tenets of majoritarian nationalism.

As Vihaan continues to work in Army headquarters in Delhi, a position he is offered in place of retirement, a group of armed terrorists attack the Uri army base camp in Kashmir at early morning, killing several unarmed army men. In the face off what takes places Major Karan Kashyap, Vihaan's brother-in-law, manages to kill the terrorists but himself succumbs to bomb blast. An emotionally evocative scene follows during which Major Karan's young daughter, amid tears, raises the battle slogan of their regiment. Following the incident, discussions are shown to be underway in both India and Pakistan with India devising a retaliatory measure and Pakistan

discussing the consequences it would have to face. Zamir, a Pakistani minister reflects that after the usual minor consequences such as banning of actors and trade fluctuations, everything would be back to normal. However, it is a new India, that, as the prime minister says, will respond in the language that Pakistan understands. Suggesting a surgical strike, Govind Bhardwaj adds:

> In the history of India we have never initiated a war with any nation and Pakistan has been taking advantage of our behaviour. 1947, '65, '71, '99. In fact, Sir, our tolerance is being understood as our weakness. They should understand that India will not remain quiet. This is a new India.

At this stage, Vihaan's love for his nation trumps his decision to stay back in Delhi with his mother. Filled with the fire of revenge, he requests to be allowed in the operation so he could avenge the death of his *brothers* (emphasis mine). As he prepares his team for the difficult endeavor, Govind on various occasions makes references to the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) thereby invoking the second crucial aspect of the new India: reliance on modern scientific advancement. The twin aspects of tradition and modernity reaches its culmination in the name of the drone, *Garuda*, designed by Ishaan, a young intern at the DRDO. It is interesting to note that the bird *garuda* is considered as the vehicle of Lord Vishnu in Hindu mythology. Thus, when Govind enlists Ishaan's support in the mission with the words, "You might have just won us the war, son," he at once acknowledges the importance of traditional values and science, and the role of the youth in the development of the new nation.

The film reaches its logical and expected conclusion with India successfully destroying the earmarked terrorist camps and eliminating the terrorists housed there. However, what is significant to reflect upon is the positioning of India with respect to Pakistan in the course of the mission. A point that is repeated time and again is that India's war is with terrorism and it does not in any way concern the ordinary Pakistani civilians. On the other hand, ministers in Pakistan are frequently shown as addressing India as "*dushman*" (enemy). This juxtaposition is made clear in the last couple of seconds of the film when Zamir wakes up to buzzing notifications on his phone and lets out a cry of frustration upon realizing the events that had transpired the night before. This is immediately followed by the words "Jai Hind" displayed on screen with celebratory music in the background. While in itself the celebration of one's nation is appreciable, even desirable, the said juxtaposition cannot but tinge the film with an ideological color.

In a bid to be inclusive in terms of gender and religion, the film makes token gestures such as in demonstrating a soldier offering *namaaz* (prayers) before the mission or in recruiting a woman in the team. Nevertheless, the new India

that *Uri* attempts to create, resting on the twin pillars of traditional values and scientific modernity, is largely centered on the dominant identity of the Hindu male, devoid of the optimism of *Veer Zaara*, another box office success.

Working through trauma: *Kya Dilli Kya Lahore* (2014)

All the three films discussed above approach the border in a manner that in reiterating the majoritarian ideology to varying degrees becomes complicit in a project of nationhood that solidifies difference between the self and other. While the influence of right-wing state ideology is resoundingly clear in *Uri, Pinjar* treads a subtler path working by means of symbols and myth, and *Veer-Zaara* despite its attempt to highlight the shared culture of basic human goodness succumbs to Bollywood's stereotypical representation of Muslims in the character of Razaa. In contrast to these films, the low budget film *Kya Dilli Kya Lahore* – hereafter referred as *KDKL* – directed by Vijay Raaz and mentored by Gulzar reads as a comment against the idea of enforced nationalism. Through a sensitive representation of the human dimension of Partition in the characters of two soldiers, one Indian and one Pakistani, the film simultaneously critiques the decision of Partition on communal grounds and offers a way of working through the trauma.

KDKL belongs to the tradition of what Devasundaram calls the "new Indie"[27] – the new wave of Indian Independent films. Reading such texts as a hybrid form, he argues that these films are influenced by the art house and parallel cinema but are marketed and distributed through mainstream channels that account for their commercial success.[28] *KDKL's* unveiling of the first look at the Wagah border invited considerable enthusiasm though the film's poor performance at the box office (with an estimated collection of approximately 98 crores) has been alluded to poor marketing strategies. The film that released on 200 screens, however, received critical acclaim and participation in film festivals, including an award at the Dada Saheb Phalke Film Festival-2015.

The film set in 1948 begins with a footage of Nehru delivering the "tryst with destiny" speech in independent India and a corresponding speech by Jinnah in Pakistan. These are immediately followed by images of refugee camps and desperate people fleeing from either sides of the border in huge convoys and overcrowded trains, as a voiceover narrates the details of places and numbers of migrants. The juxtaposition of the scenes corresponding to independence and Partition respectively, before delving into the narrative of the film proper, contends that the price for independence was paid in the form of Partition; that while political leaders announced the creation of new nations, ordinary people were uprooted and forced to leaves their homes. The tension between nation and home drives the minimalistic plot of the film that revolves around the Pakistan army's attempt to recover a file about an alleged tunnel from Red Fort in Delhi to Lahore. Two strains run parallel in the film, corresponding to

the nation and home respectively: of newly found national allegiance and responsibility reflected in the skirmishes between the two soldiers, and of a shared trauma of loss of home and of finding a place in a new home.

Rehmat Ali, a Pakistani soldier who migrated to Lahore from Chandni Chowk in Delhi is tasked with retrieving the file after all his companions have died. Scared to go to Indian outpost alone, an exhausted and thirsty Rehmat Ali is ordered by his Captain, "I want the file, *muhajir*." The term that translates as "migrant," in the aftermath of Partition, became an identity marker for Muslims who had migrated from the Indian side of border to Pakistan. The term often carried negative connotations, mimicking a slur. As the ramifications of the term results in an awkward silence between the two, the Captain tells him in a mellow tone, "Go ahead, son. This is your opportunity. *Khuda* has provided you with a chance to prove yourself as a true Pakistani. Show to your country that you are a true Pakistani." Rehmat still hesitant, he threatens to prove his entire family as traitors. Thus alienated in his nation and forced to demonstrate his nationalism, he walks up to the Indian outpost. He stops by a well, which happens to be the only well in the vicinity, and here he runs into Samarth Pratap, a cook in the Indian army who at the time was the only soldier guarding the post. On seeing each other, Samarth runs back to the post and Rehmat takes cover outside it. Both are equally scared and both have limited ammunition at their disposal. Thus begins the interplay of the two narrative strands that culminate in a message of shared trauma resulting from the Partition and thus of the oneness of self and other.

For the remainder of the film the little outpost at an isolated stretch along the India-Pakistan border forms the site of action. The barren, dull atmosphere of the surroundings lends the outpost an uncanny Beckettesque aura, signifying the absurdity of the situation where ordinary people are caught in the political crossfire. The motif of thirst that remains unquenched throughout the film heightens the feeling of disillusionment of the independence dream as indicated in the arguments exchanged between Rehmat and Samarth:

Samarth: "Who caused all the violence? You people sent truckloads of corpses."

Rehmat: "Read the newspapers. The first truck came from India. You did not even spare the children. [. . .] I picked up the dismembered corpses of my relatives."

Samarth: "Did we not do the same? Till date we are searching for our relatives."

Samarth painfully remembers that in migrating from Lahore to Delhi he lost his home where his family were moneylenders. As the film progresses we learn that Rehmat who now lives in Lahore migrated from the same place in Delhi where Samarth's family now lives. However, in addition to the tangible losses, the Partition also resulted in emotional losses as a heavyhearted Rehmat says: "He [Jawaharlal Nehru] had come to our school. I had given him two roses. Others had given one." The sense of betrayal implicit in these words is only rendered more pensive when one understands that it also implies the pain of loss of home. He later remarks, "The moon would come out in the sky above my house [in Delhi, pre-Partition] as if it would fall off on my bed. The moon in Lahore never felt mine." And Samarth adds, "One's kite looks good flying in one's own stretch of sky." Such occasions where an exchange of vituperative remarks about the damage done by the other is interspersed with a poignant understanding, even respect, of each other's' feelings and pain abound in the film rendering a sensitivity largely absent from mainstream films dealing with the trauma of Partition.

Following such reminiscences that build a kind of connection between the two soldiers of rival nations, at one point Rehmat asks to see Samarth's face. Rehmat comes out of his hideout, unarmed, as Samarth looks at him from the post's window. His gaze is interrupted by an information over the communication device that Pakistan army had violated the rule of cease-fire thereby once again emphasizing the impact of creation of borders on human connections between ordinary people. A back and forth of relative advantage follows between the two with Samarth finally being taken captive by Rehmat. As he is being herded toward the Pakistan border, with the bag of files on his shoulder, they are met by Barfi Singh, Indian army's mail carrier. Upon noticing the bag, he doubts Samarth's intentions, calling him "refugee, half Pakistani." Notwithstanding his pleadings that he was only staging the entire episode, Barfi continues to accuse him of being a traitor. This incident once again brings Samarth on the same plane as Rehmat owing to their shared predicament of being the outsider, the other belonging neither to India nor Pakistan but only to the limbo of refugee-hood. The essence of this in-between state is poetically expressed in the following words of Rehmat after Barfi takes them back to the post as prisoners to be handed over to higher officials:

> Early morning father said we needed to go somewhere. We went somewhere too. But till date we could not understand where we went. I lost mother; my sister too passed away. But till date we could not understand where we went.

Not surprisingly, it is only Samarth who is able to understand the meaning of these words. In the final sequence when Rehmat learns that Samarth is only unconscious but not dead (Rehmat had earlier hit him with a bullet), he rushes to him, addressing him as "*bhaijaan*" (brother). His Captain who in the meanwhile had managed to reach the post hears him and again reinforces

his otherness by calling him *muhajir* and traitor. Proceeding then to shoot Samarth who remains clueless about the file's location, he is in turn shot dead by Rehmat.

The film ends in an anti-climactic manner with Samarth surviving his wounds but Rehmat Ali succumbing to a bullet fired from a distance. Interestingly, the soldier who fires the fatal shot remains outside the camera's vision and the nationality of the bullet that kills the Pakistani soldier is never discovered. Nor is the file found and one wonders if Rehmat Ali's doubt that it never existed in the first place was indeed correct. The lives of the two soldiers then become a farce in the power play of the leaders and officers championing the superiority of their respective nations. The political decision to draw arbitrary borders did indeed create two nations but it also created millions of uprooted citizens whose allegiance to their new nations would invariably be colored with their emotional attachment to the home they left behind on the other side of the border. Yet, it is in the interstitial space created between home and nation that the film reposes trust in the possibility for human connection beyond the limitations of border politics. Herein lies the scope of working through trauma as Gulzar narrates in a poignant verse at the film's beginning:

> If there are borders, let them be
> Someone might have etched them in a fit of anger.
> Let us now use these to divide the ground into two sections
> And play kabaddi.
> If there are borders, let them be.
> You come to my side,
> Challenge me, slap my hands and try to run away;
> I will catch you and not let you go back.
> When I slowly come to your side,
> You too do not let me go.
> Do not let me touch those lines of the border
> Someone might have etched them in a fit of rage.
>
> If there are borders, let them be.

Conclusion

The analyses of selected films corroborates the crucial link between ideology and cinematic representations. A film's positioning of itself with respect to dominant state ideology, however, may differ thus contesting the idea that films always serve as ideological state apparatus. The paper examined this aspect through the selected films' differing interactions with the common figure of the "border." *Pinjar* and *Veer-Zaara* belong to the genre of family drama with a principal focus on the theme of love and separation that is reconciled in the climax while *Uri* and *KDKL* are war films. However, *Pinjar*

begins with an anticipation of border and as the film progresses becomes an exploration of the changes brought by the drawing of borders. *Veer-Zaara* talks about transcending borders, *Uri* about defending borders and *KDKL* about complicating borders. The paper concludes that while *Veer-Zaara* and *Uri* are both mainstream Bollywood movies, governed primarily by the logic of box office demand and economic success, the historical and socio-political moment of the film's production governs their respective thematic treatment. Thus, in iterating the state's rhetoric of a "new India" *Uri* represents a universalizing right-wing majoritarian nationalism that frames the self and other in a dichotomous relationship, albeit sans the anti-Pakistan invective of films like *Gadar* and *LOC: Kargil*. *Veer-Zaara*, on the other hand, attempts to represent a cross-border shared culture based on ideals of truth, inclusive development and recognizing the inherent goodness of people, irrespective of religion or nationality. *Pinjar*, though resembling Parallel/New Wave cinema in the seriousness of theme and its formal treatment, nevertheless shares the essence of *Uri* in reflecting the dominant state ideology. It is finally the Independent film *KDKL* that positions itself outside the polarities of self and other to assert that the trauma of Partition transcends borders. It is only through a cognizance of this universality of trauma that one can begin to think beyond the values of majoritarian nationalism.

Notes

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2 Douglas Kellner, "Film, Politics and Ideology: Reflections on Hollywood Film in the Age of Reagan," *Velvet Light Trap* 27 (1991): 15.
3 M. Madhava Prasad, *Ideology of the Hindi Film: A Historical Construction* (New Delhi, India: Oxford India Publisher, 1998), 136.
4 Ravi S Vasudevan, review of *Ideology of the Hindi Film: A Historical Construction*, by M. Madhava Prasad, Delhi, Oxford University Press 1998, 258 pp+ ix.
5 *Ibid*.
6 Dominant ideology refers to the ideas and beliefs shared by the majority in a society. In the present discussion of the Indo-Pak border as a reminder of the Partition, the term denotes the beliefs about the "other" – Pakistan or even the Indian Muslim – that persist in the majoritarian ethos. With the rising tide of majoritarian Hindutva nationalism in the country, the state often espouses similar divisive views between the self and other. It is the films' positioning with respect to such a majoritarian ideology that the paper intends to study.
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14 Rajadhyaksha, "The Bollywoodisation of the Indian Cinema," 32.
15 Amrita Pritam, *Pinjar: The Skeleton and Other Stories*, 2nd ed. (New Delhi, India: Tara, 2015).
16 In developing a social theory of collective trauma, Jeffrey C. Alexander argues that cultural trauma rather than being objective is "imagined into being" through symbolic representations. Which of the several contesting perspectives to an event of collective trauma prevails is governed by their respective "performative potential." For a detailed understanding of cultural trauma, see Jeffrey C. Alexander, *Trauma: A Social Theory* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2012).
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19 *Ibid*., 115.
20 European Foundation for South Asian Studies, "Indo-Pak Relations: A Brief History," https://www.efsas.org/topics/indo-pak-relations.html (accessed August 13, 2021).
21 Friends without Borders is a volunteer initiative to foster peace between India and Pakistan. Conceived by John Silliphant and Mark Peters, the initiative involved children of both nations writing letters to each other. The movement inspired the "Aman ki Asha" ("Hope for Peace") campaign launched jointly by the Jang Group of Pakistan and Times of India Group. For more information, see Friends Without Borders, "Learn About FWB," https://www.friendswithoutborders.org/index.html (accessed August 13, 2021); aman ki asha, "About," https://amankiasha.com/about/ (accessed August 13, 2021).
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23 *Ibid*.
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Building an ideological nation-state: migrancy and patriarchy in Khadija Mastoor's Novel, *Zameen*

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Building an ideological nation-state: migrancy and patriarchy in Khadija Mastoor's Novel, *Zameen*

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ABSTRACT

The subcontinental divide in 1947 left deep scars on South Asians, especially the generation that went through the bloody transition during the immigration process. Its impacts can still be seen in literary and political discourses on both sides of the border. This study examines the text of Khadija Mastoor's Urdu novel, Zameen with the uncertainties, and mendacities the process of migrancy created. It also analyses the deeply rooted patriarchal structures, reinforced by state ideological thrust, that impacts millions of Pakistani women, as delineated in the novel. First, it establishes conceptual underpinnings within the context of feminist struggles against the subjugation of women in the new state. Secondly, it appraises the ubiquitous nature of mendacities triggered by migrancy along with its related bearings on Pakistani society. The study analyses the novel's text as a research methodology for comprehending the trauma of partition conveyed through its plot and characters.

Introduction

Pakistan and India began their political journey in different directions after the partition in 1947. With regular elections, India strengthened its democratic process based on civilian supremacy over the security establishment. On the other hand, Pakistan's political process became hostage to the security establishment that transformed itself into the most powerful state institution and refused to allow continuity of the political process. With regular intervention in politics, it weakened democratic structures throughout Pakistan's political history. Despite this difference, both countries are currently at the same level where narrowly defined communal-nationalistic ideologies have become a predominant source of maintaining majoritarian power and control.

By analyzing the text of Khadija Mastoor's Urdu novel *Zameen* (land), this study discusses the impacts of migrancy on the sociopolitical spheres of Pakistan. It examines the ideological drive in the new nation-state, which also strengthened the deep-rooted patriarchal structure. Besides analyzing the socio-psychological transformations that determine women's

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public and private space, the study also narrates the moral decay in the forms of mendacities and corruption in the newly created state. It explores the upheavals a middle-class Muslim family goes through after it arrives in Pakistan from India in the aftermath of the partition.

Through the two conceptual constructs of migrancy and patriarchy, the novelist intends to convey the emerging sociopolitical transformations of a nation, juxtaposing family tensions with the nation's political development.

The first part of the study narrates the development of Pakistan as an ideological state from independence onward. The following section explores the dimensions of primary concepts of migrancy and patriarchy, and the following section offers a discussion of these concepts as revealed by the novel's textual intricacies. The final part synthesizes the overall discussion and offers conclusions. Textual analysis, in this sense, becomes the primary methodological tool in exploring multidimensional facets of the unfolding plot.

State ideology and the ideological state

> "Conceived in a hurry and delivered prematurely – a last minute Caesarian by doctors tending the British empire – Pakistan emerged in August 1947, its birth accompanied by massive loss of blood. In its first year, the new state was deprived of a limb (Kashmir) and then lost its father (Mohammed Ali Jinnah). Then, like its tougher and more ruthless confessional twin, Israel, it decided to accept the offer of a permanent nurse. It was assumed that the only route to survival was to become a Cold War patient under the permanent supervision of Western imperialism. As the British empire faded, the United States assumed responsibility of Pakistan.[1]

Partition of the Indian subcontinent, as Tariq Ali elaborates here, began with a series of upheavals for Pakistan. However, it meant different things to India and Pakistan, independent nations. For India, it meant a secular-socialist state where religion was not a state concern, at least in its formative years. For Pakistan, it meant a separate homeland for Muslims where most citizens would be free of majoritarian repression. The journey began with the trauma of separation and ended with the religiously charged state apparatus where women and minorities have little space to thrive and even survive.

An ideological struggle was imminent in Pakistan between progressive forces who believed in a secular state where all citizens could enjoy economic, gender, and social opportunities based on an egalitarian system. On the other hand, conservatives strived to make religion a state ideology from the beginning. But what does it mean when they talk about Islam as a state ideology?

For scholar and writer Ziaul Haque, it was not as straightforward:

"The purpose of this ideology is not to reconstruct society or the truly Islamic basis of social egalitarianism and economic brotherhood; instead, its appeal to religion functions to subjugate the poor and illiterate masses by obfuscating through religious dogmas and superstitions all social repression and exploitation."[2]

This ideology, however, was introduced not as a religious doctrine but as a slogan to have a separate state to safeguard the status of the land-owning class and aristocracy. Haque argues that although Muslim leaders were concerned about egalitarianism and equality in the early stages of the freedom movement, the movement later became more religious, proposing a faith-based ideological thrust in any future state for Indian Muslims. Thus religion was used to unite the elite, lower and middle-class Muslims.

Haque further stipulates that after the partition, the landed aristocracy and ruling elites joined hands to pick and choose only those components of religion that sustained their power and control. Thus, for instance, Zakat, conceptualized as a charity for the poor, is being deducted from citizens' bank accounts as a legal requirement imposed by the military dictator General Ziaul Haq. On the other hand, Riba, which means the abolition of interest, was conveniently not implemented.

Thus the religious provisions beneficial to the ruling elite were utilized while the components not favorable to them were rejected altogether. It became obvious that the ideological imposition was partial and incomplete, serving the capitalist and landed aristocracy. But this gave rise to other ills in the new nation-state:

> The propagation of feudalistic and capitalist religion by the state has aggravated social problems and added to the miseries and problems of the people. They are stunned to see an 'upsurge' of Islam accompanied by the proliferation of corruption, graft, mediocrity, hypocrisy, and cowardice, among other things."[3]

Soon after the partition, the Constituent Assembly passed the Objectives Resolution establishing the foundations of the ideological state, which smoothly paved the way for factional bigotry in Pakistan. Ishtiaq Ahmed elaborates it more clearly:

"On March 7, 1949, the Objectives Resolution established the format for defining the relationship between Islam, the state, and its citizens. It progressively incorporated Islamic features was not inevitable, but it was very likely because of all the negative factors mentioned above that converged against democracy."[4]

This Resolution established the doctrine of "divine sovereignty" delegated to the state of Pakistan, declaring that the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice will be observed only if Islam enunciates them.

The Resolution indicated the failures of modernist forces in the country who, despite their intentions, were not able to set an ideological doctrine for a modernistic state. Ishtiaq again sheds light on this aspect:

> The Pakistani modernist rulers, who held power from 1947 to 1977, failed to provide an alternative to the Islamic state; on the contrary, more and more dogmatic features were added to the Pakistani national identity until, in 1977. General Mohammad Zau-ul Haq set aside the charade of democracy and went about constructing Pakistan as fortress of Islam, braced with not only military but also repressive legal and cultural measures.[5]

With democracy as an umbrella, the system " . . . . acquired more and more dogmatic features and fundamentalist overtones. The convergence of such external and internal factors created the metaphor of Pakistan being a fortress of Islam."[6]

Once this was all set, religion became an effective tool to legitimize authoritarian or civil regimes. From Ayub Khan to General Pervez Musharraf and Z. A. Bhutto to Imran Khan, all rulers used religion to prolong their rule, win elections or appease the forces of religious orthodoxy.

While faith-based ideology was sidetracking progressive and feminist forces in Pakistan, the military gained the strength to become an organized political party and an economic conglomerate. It grabbed the farming land from farmers and established industries and infiltrated federal and provincial administration through battalions of retired military officers.

The security threat from the neighboring nuclear power, India, became a profound justification for continuing power and control of the defense establishment over all spheres of national life. Whenever civilian regimes tried to normalize political and trade relations with India, the military sabotaged them with armed offensives or proxy groups. For political analyst Ahmed Rashid, however, it also exposed the fragilities of political elites:

> The military defined national identity, in terms of the country's vulnerability, as a national security state, with a permanent mistrust of India. The politicians in power have never seriously tried to challenge this isolating self-definition by offering alternative policies, such as promoting good neighborliness, ending support for Islamic extremism, fostering economic development, and providing education.[7]

Later, however, when it became clear that a permanent state of conflict with India was not in the "national interest," as defined by the security establishment, it never shied away from engaging India directly in peace negotiations. As a result, General Pervez Musharraf began deliberating with India to resolve the Kashmir issue based on his four- point-agenda. Although the process was unsuccessful as Musharraf disappeared from the political scene, it proved that no peace process could be successful without military involvement or approval.

The military also gained strength with powerful nations and institutions' financial and strategic support. For example, General Zia ul Haq's dictatorial regime received international funds to prepare a fighting force against the Soviet army in Afghanistan, "This had been achieved in a most cost-effective manner: $300 million contributed by the US taxpayers and $200 million by Saudi Arabia."[8]

In an interview, defense analyst Ayesha Siddiqa told this author that because of the powerful security establishment, which refuses to allow a free exchange of ideas on social and political issues, democratic norms are systematically weakening in Pakistan.

She further elaborated: "Under the current circumstances, the national assembly is there mainly to rubber stamp preapproved decisions. Political parties are weak in challenging decisions or raising their voice on issues. Anti-corruption has just become a political slogan, which means nothing. Let us not forget that the main political parties were equally involved."[9] Corruption, however, is not limited to political leaders and parties; it has become a standard practice of all institutions, including the military and bureaucracy.

"General Zia, unfortunately, left more things behind than he took away with him when he died in a plane crash. The will to resist is one of those things. Citizens are so afraid of the ongoing suppressive environment that they do not dare to fight anymore. The political parties, in particular, are in a bad state," she extrapolated.[10]

These political developments helped create an ideological-authoritarian state that imposes a system of internal colonialism and demonstrates a colonial posture externally. Internally, the powerful center denies economic and political rights of peripheral provinces, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Interestingly, in a nation where most citizens live in extreme poverty, the state behaves like a colonial power, especially in Kashmir. As a result, Pakistan (and India) deny Kashmiris the right to self-determination.[11]

Theoretical constructs

A new line of research emerged in the fifties and sixties, known as cultural studies, initiated by the Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham, England. Influenced by the post-World War II advancements in semiotics and structuralism and drawing on new academic works of Gramsci and critical race theory, the CCCS research broadened the Marxist theoretical approaches to race, gender, ethnicity, class, and nationalism. Its founders, Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggard, Stuart Hall, and associates, took a holistic approach to culture as a phenomenon deeply rooted in the lives of ordinary people.

Stuart Hall was interested in the whole process of production, circulation, consumption, and reproduction of media content. His influential encoding and decoding model offered to create the "meaningful" discourse through the media production process. Hall explained how the meaning structures are encoded based on the frameworks of knowledge, structures of production in the media organization, and its technical infrastructures. On the audience side, this meaning structure is decoded based on similar dynamics.[12] The meaning is, thus, derived by the audience as presented, received with modifications or rejected altogether, based on the types or levels of the audience.

Subscribing to the cultural studies approach, this study examines the text of a selected Urdu novel. This framework explores the relevance of the two thematic constructs of patriarchy and migrancy to the novel's plot and characters. By decoding the text, it also attempts to explore parallels between the novel and the ongoing political developments in Pakistan.

Patriarchy and the status of women

> Two decades into the twenty-first century, in an increasingly polarized society with vast, widening disparities between rich and poor, a new multifaceted and intersectional feminist activism has swept the country and the world. The label "feminist" is once again embraced; millions of women and men march in protest against the misogyny, racism, and xenophobia of mostly white male ruling class; even the media that shunned feminism for decades now reports on it seriously.[13]

As this analysis indicates, emerging voices for women's rights are taking over the streets in the US and worldwide today. However, the modern Muslim world is still searching for acceptance of women based on equality and dignity in their male-dominated societies.

Sociocultural structures in postcolonial Pakistan carry the centuries-old cultural baggage of South Asia, where women deserve respect only if they follow the traditional way of life, which is essentially patriarchal and subservient to a male-dominated family structure. The newly emerged state of Pakistan also inherited the complexities of a heterogeneous Muslim society in undivided India.

In her book Faith and Feminism in Pakistan, Afiya Zia discussed three waves of feminist scholarship. The first wave emerged as a result of international scholarship in the 1980s, which for the first time, pushed forward women's issues as a political agenda. This wave also impacted the feminist thought process in Pakistan, mainly as an observer rather than a participant in the debate. It was also the period when the *Women Action Forum* challenged the dictatorial regime of General Ziaul Haq and its political and legal onslaught on women by strengthening patriarchy and denigrating women as second-class citizens of Pakistan.

The second wave emerged as part of the postcolonial scholarship widely known as Subaltern Studies that questioned failures of modernity related to women's status in postcolonial India. This also helped initiate a debate in South Asia and Pakistan. But unfortunately, it was also the time when the political alliance between the military dictatorship and conservative parties resulted in legal frameworks further strengthening the patriarchal social structure. Fauzia Rafiq elaborated it more precisely:

> Pakistan government formulated and instituted a few laws. These laws were duly recommended by the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII, established in 1979), which has as its members the top religious scholars of the country and which takes as references the writings of the scholars of other Muslim countries"[14]

She cited three laws to support her argument: The law of evidence which required witnesses of two women but one man in certain financial matters, the law requiring four male eyewitnesses of rape, and the "diyat" law determining the blood money for murdered women as half of the similar compensation required for men.

The third wave of feminist scholarship emerged in the post 9/11 period "that is critical of Enlightenment ideals, modernity and secularism and is invested in uncovering the 'complex subjectivities of Islamists," Afiya Zia stipulates.[15]

An overwhelming thrust of faith-based ideological doctrine defined legal, social, and economic boundaries for women assigning a lesser position in society. This status denigration was reinforced through gender-based cultural productions, legally delineated restrictions, and economic constraints.

Feminist movements in the West, particularly in the United States, evolved from a long struggle for civil rights to the current movements for reproductive rights, equality of female soldiers to participate in wars, homosexuality, equal employment and pay, glass ceilings in corporate and political worlds, and other issues. These concerns, besides other demands, primarily emanate from the late-capitalist structures. However, from the era of media neglect and negative stereotyping, feminist movements in the United States now enjoy media acceptance and even favorable treatment of gender issues.[16]

In Pakistan, however, where the late-feudalistic structure considers women as property, feminist movements are in the phase of defining their role and their position on issues. In a society where women are openly cursed, harassed, and scolded on the TV screen and face violence in private and public places, their issues seem to be at a different level. Strengthened by the state ideology, deeply rooted patriarchal-hegemonic structures are undoubtedly the sources of women's sufferings. Women's issues in the Pakistani context mean ending the atrocities, struggling for equal rights, and ending prejudices against half of the population, as evident from economic and sociocultural suppression. These and all other issues, including women's reproductive rights, sexual

orientations, abortion, equal pay, and economic independence, emanate from patriarchal and class-based structures of society. Women's movements might be at different levels in different societies, but their issues seem similar.

In a sense, the emergence of conservative feminism in Pakistan, and several other Muslim states, is a recurrence of a conservative backlash in the United States in the seventies, which challenged women's demands for equality, including reproductive rights and abortion. In Pakistan, this movement draws strength from religious groups, including Jamaat-e Islami. The movement rejects women's autonomy and civil rights by distancing from the Taliban's positions on women's education, employment, and segregation.[17] Although, this conservative scholarship raises a voice for women's rights, including education and employment, it denies their social and economic emancipation based on gender equalities.

The ongoing struggle of the urban middle-class women (and men) manifested in the annual Women's March, protests, and the feminist scholarship, offer bold resistance to atrocities against women in Pakistan. Several movements and organizations have historically contributed to the country's awareness of women's issues. One of the pioneering organizations for women's rights, the Democratic Women's Association (DWA), formed in 1948, worked on Marxist lines. All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) provided the early base for women's movements even though some activists consider it a mechanism devised to support state policies. Other organizations, including the United Front for Women's Rights, Shirrkat Gah, and Aurat,[18] also contributed to women's struggles in their own way. Women's Front (WF), a student group at the Punjab University, Lahore, played a significant role in increasing awareness of women's issues in the seventies.[19] Of all the initiatives, the Women's Action Forum (WAF), established in 1981, proved to be a very active organization that soon became a national voice for challenging General Zia's dictatorial onslaught on women's rights.

These and other movements, however, lacked a rural connection, except for the Sindhiani movement in Sindh. Most of these movements also missed collaboration with working women and men of lower classes and a solid ideological and political base. Other movements around the world, however, manifest similar drawbacks. Moreover, the current liberal-secular approaches to women's issues fail to address the deeply rooted patriarchal system and class dynamics in sociocultural structures. Any struggle for women's rights cannot be isolated from class dynamics, feudalism, and capitalism. It is like trying to heal a wound without knowing the root cause. With this historical review of feminist issues, let us discuss the second conceptual construct of migrancy and its related notions.

Migrancy and its impacts

Complexities of migrancy in Pakistan gave rise to mendacity and related social ills as legacies of the partition. In a society already divided by income disparities, gender inequalities, and sociocultural divisions, migrancy added more convolutions in the aftermath of the subcontinental divide. Aijaz Ahmad, discussing Sulman Rushdie's novel *Shame*, talks about Rushdie's notion of migrancy:

> . . .migrancy is given to us as an ontological condition of all human beings, while the migrant is said to have 'floated upward from history.' In the second version, articulated more fully in the more recent writings, this myth of ontological unbelonging is replaced by another, larger myth of *excess* of belongings: not that he belongs nowhere, but that he belongs to *too many* places.[20]

Thus, according to traditional wisdom, human beings are primarily migrants as we travel from one world to the next. On the other hand, we belong to the whole world without claiming one place as our home. Migrancy can lead to political upheavals, whether the 1947 mass transition in the subcontinent or the current crises of Syrian and Afghan refugees fleeing from a perennial state of civil war in their homeland. Rushdi, as discussed by Aijaz, distinguishes exile from vagrancy: "Yet we need to make a distinction between exile and vagrancy; there is usually a principle in exile, there is always the only relaxation in vagrancy.[21]

Human tragedies and personal trauma that migrancy brings to migrants also develop into psychological complexities individually and other ills socially. For example, Aijaz mentioned Rushdi's notions of "human betrayal" and "inability to resist," the two human traits within the context of Rushdie's novel *Shame*. Interestingly, like *Zameen, Shame* also narrates the story of a migrant family in postcolonial Pakistan with a political overtone and personification of national figures by some of the novel's characters.

The political disorder created by migrancy can also lead to social mendacities such as corruption, deceit, exploitation, sexual abuse, and venality. People tend to be greedy and corrupt in finding opportunities for personal and economic gains in the ongoing anarchy and the prevailing chaos of the immigration process.

The Washington Post correspondent for South Asia, Pamila Constable, in her book *Fragments of Grace*, finds cases of rampant corruption in the sociocultural fabric of Pakistan:

"The problem is corruption, institutionalized and ubiquitous. International agencies rate Pakistan as one of the most corrupt countries in the world, credit card fraud is so frequent that overseas charges are routinely blocked."[22]

Corruption indeed has become a hallmark of Pakistani society, where it has become an accepted norm in the military, government, private, or public institutions:

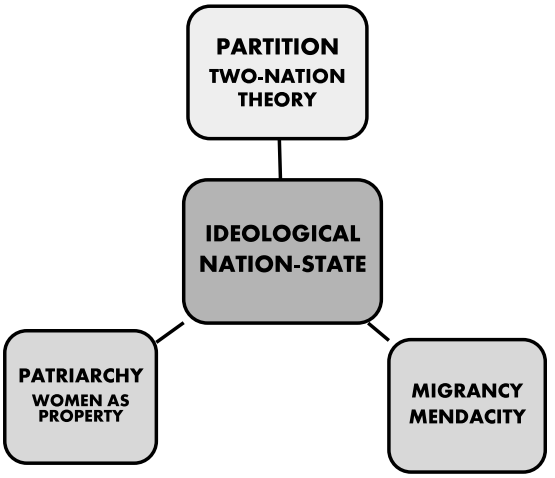

Figure 1. Proposed conceptual model. Source: Author

"A hefty chunk of economy is entirely illegal: the smuggling trade. Hand-woven carpets and opium sap from Afghanistan, stolen Japanese TVs and car parts from the Gulf States, antibiotics from India and tires form Iran – all follow ancient smuggling routes across Pakistan, avoiding duties, and taxes with the collusion of customs authorities," Constable continues.[23]

Proposed conceptual model

The proposed conceptual model for this study (Figure 1) represents the partition process with its related components of migrancy and patriarchy. It also portrays the post-partition scenario within the new ideological state of Pakistan. The liberation movement led to the subcontinental divide, creating two independent nations based on the two-nation theory.

As the political dynamics shaped the new nation, it became an ideological state, with the security establishment emerging as the primary power broker using democracy as a tool for legitimacy. Immediately after the partition, the new theocratic state had to deal with the trauma of migrancy and the emerging crisis of settling the migrant families in the new state. Mendacities, such as corruption, financial mismanagement, and land grabbing, became the order of the day due to migrancy. Militancy and factional divide were the other logical consequences of an emphasis on conservative ideological thrust.

While the nation-state embraced religion as the national ideology manifested in its new constitution and the legal frameworks, patriarchy became the cultural norm further endorsed and supported by the old feudal traditions. As a result, curbs on women's civil rights, domestic and public violence against

them, and subjugation of women became accepted practices in the new nation-state. The following section further explores how patriarchy and migrancy continue dominating Pakistan's social and political spheres.

Khadija Mastoor and her fiction

The trauma of partition with its miseries and bloodshed left deep scars on people's lives on both sides of the border. This poignant path to independence divided innumerable families to live with new expectations and new struggles. How did the Urdu literature, including novels and short stories, reflect these massive transitions and human experiences?

Urdu fiction is full of partition anecdotes with micro and macro-level themes. Urdu short stories and novels offer in-depth reflections of the subcontinental divide from social chaos to low moralities and societal structural transformations. Manto's short stories narrate the miseries of people who went through the shock of migrating to a new homeland, impacting individuals, especially women. His stories, *Siyah Hashiay* (Black Margins) and *Toba Tek Singh* (a town that became part of Pakistan), superbly explore the psychological impacts of the partition on human lives.

Besides short stories, the Urdu novel offers various perspectives on the partition with its cruelties and absurdities. Quratul Ain Haider, Khadija Mastoor, Abdullah Hussain, Jamila Hashmi, Nisar Aziz Butt, Dr. Ahsan Farooqi, Ghulamus Saqlain Naqvi, Mumtaz Mufti, Intizar Hussain, Mustansar Hussain Tarar, Joginder Pal, Abdul Umar, and Ramanand Sagar are some of the novelists, who tell stories of partition with a variety of perspectives. This theme continues narrating another divide in 1971 that divided Pakistan into two separate states.[24]

Quratul Ain Haider, with her masterpieces *Safina e Gham e Dil* (The Caravan of my Gloomy Heart) and *Mairy bhi Sanam Khanay* (Idol Houses of Mine), depicts the walls of separation that were being built in the subcontinent with related complexities. Abdullah Hussain's novel *Udas Naslain* (Depressed Generations) demonstrates dissolution of an established civilization into chaos. Ahsan Farooqi's *Sangam* recounts Indian history from a Muslim perspective. Intizar Hussain's fiction walks with readers on different paths from *Tazkira* (Tale), where nostalgia becomes the primary thought process, to *Agay Samandar Ha*i (Sea Comes Ahead), which tries to do away with the prejudices that came in the aftermath of the partition.

Khadija Mastoor (1927–1982), one of the prominent Urdu novelists, also deals with the partition's ordeal in her two novels, *Aangan* (the courtyard), published in 1962, and *Zameen* (land), published posthumously in 1987. These novels focus on women's suppression determined by patriarchal structures and the

mendacities that came as legacies of the new era of freedom. Migrated to Pakistan before the partition, she might have undergone a similar transition to embrace the newfound "freedom," but the novel does not echo her own experiences.

Aangan[25] became her most celebrated novel, which also received the prestigious Adamji Literary Award in Pakistan. It also became a popular TV drama series produced by Hum TV, broadcast between December 2018 and June 2019 in 27 episodes. The teleplay follows the novel closely and creates the pre-partition environment with fine details.

This novel reflects the fast-changing political landscape in the pre-independence period through the prism of a Muslim family. It takes the audience through multigenerational stories of four brothers and their families. Here, family feuds and disagreements highlight the plot where family members are divided on antagonistic political ideologies. Some support the National Congress, while others favor the Muslim League.[26] The novel exposes the contradictions of the landed aristocracy, which has lost its wealth and power and become part of the middle-class Indian society. Women of the family, who have their assigned roles in a patriarchal system, are always at the receiving end. Going through the migrancy and partition, the young and educated Alia rejects the male dominance and decides to embrace an independent lifestyle in the new nation-state of Pakistan.

The second novel, *Zameen*, continues the story of Aangan. However, not a sequel to the first novel; it forms conceptual linkages between the two novels. While the first novel deals with the political struggle for independence as it impacts a Muslim family in India, the second narrates the family's distresses after migrating to Pakistan.[27]

Although both novels have their merits, the recognition *Aangan* received was far overwhelming compared to *Zameen*. Asif Farrukhi even speculated that the novel lacks refinement because the author did not have a chance to improve it before she passed away. He even asked her sister, Hajra Masroor, also a known fiction writer, if this was true. But she categorically denied it and confirmed that Khadija Mastoor was able to refine and improve the novel before she passed away.[28]

Although the critics have largely ignored *Zameen*, its finesse in exposing the multiple layers of feminist and patriarchal subtilities, feudal atrocities, and social mendacities is unmatched. Undoubtedly, it beautifully established the parallels between a family and the newly formed nation-state. American scholar of South Asian studies Daisy Rockwell translated *Anagan* into English titled *Women's Courtyard*[29] and *Zameen* with *A Promised Land*.[30]

Zameen: the double burden of migrancy and patriarchy

This section offers an analysis of *Zameen*'s text within the context of migrancy and patriarchy.

Migrancy comes with emptiness and hopefulness[31] at the same time as migrants, uprooted from cultural and historical heritage of their own, come to the new culture not knowing what lies in their future. They are, however, determined to build a promising future with hard work and passion. The subcontinental partition also offered new hopes to migrants for starting a new life. It looks, however, that migrancy and patriarchy emerged as twin epitomes that overpowered the Pakistani society from the onset, as depicted by the novel.

The novel opens at the Walton Refugee Camp in Lahore, where migrants live in tents. It takes us to an older man screaming and moaning about her kidnapped daughter. The emptiness for this older person has a poignant metaphor for the gloomy new environment:

"My daughter, where's my daughter? The older man was screaming, tearing his hair. Then suddenly, he is silent. Perhaps, screaming calms him down, and he sits quietly for hours. People pass through him, and no one would talk to him or answer his questions. Probably no one dared to answer his questions."[32]

Then the novel introduces the reader to its main character Sajida, who has also come to the Camp with her father, an accountant who worked for a fabric shop back in India. It seems she has the same kind of emptiness and frustration for not having an appropriate answer to the older man's screaming:

"Whenever the old man screams, Sajida gets upset for not finding appropriate words to console him. She didn't know that no word is invented yet to comfort the people who have been the target of tyranny."[33]

With this tragic introduction to the unfolding story, the author intends to prepare the reader for what would come later in the novel. It unveils the helplessness of six female characters in the novel, all with their emptiness, determined by their social circumstances leading to their psychological tensions. Sajida, the main character's courage and determination to chart her future and the realities of stresses that the partition brought to her life also show the despair that has become part of her psyche in a new promised land. When her father passes away at the Camp, she moves with Rehabilitation Officer Nazim as she has no relatives to stay with. Interestingly, Nazim's aunt Khala Bi expects Sajida to work as a domestic servant like Taji.

Sajida returns to her room after telling everyone that she came here to get an education and that she is not Taji, who was also brought from the Camp: "She thought for a moment about what the others were talking about; they might be talking about her. They should know by now they cannot deceive lonely girls, bring them from the refugee camp to serve as a domestic servant."[34]

Other than Taji and Sajida, three women live at the same mansion. Amman Bi (mother) lives with her two sons, Nazim and Kazim, and the family patriarch Malik, her husband. Khala Bi (aunt) is her cousin who lives here with her daughter Salima. While, supposedly, Aman Bi is the woman of the house, practically, Khala Bi holds the real power in the family, ostensibly permitted by the family patriarch Malik.

As the flashback reveals, Malik was madly in love with Khala Bi and wanted to marry her in his youth, but his family disapproved of it. Meanwhile, Khala Bi married someone else and became a widow when her husband died. So Malik, a married man now, brought her home with her daughter Salima to support them.

Sajida approaches Amman Bi to hear her perspective:

"Who snatched your love, Amman Bi? Sajida asked, taking her cold hand into her hand.

> There was no question of snatching my love, Amman Bi said; we were engaged in childhood. When I grew up, I started loving my fiancé like other foolish girls. But he was in love with my cousin Amna. Do you know Amna? Salima's mother, your Khala Bi, but no one knows it. When Nazim came, Amna became a widow. Malik brought Amna and Salima home. So I was happy, and people appreciated it."[35]

Of the two brothers, Nazim loves Sajida, but she is madly in love with her childhood friend in India, Salahuddin; they got separated in the frenzy of partition. The thought that she would accept Nazim as her husband never crossed her mind as she believed that Salahuddin would return to her one sunny day.

Nazim's younger brother Kazim knows exactly how to climb up the steps economically and professionally. With his carefully developed plans for attaining his lifelong goals, he wants to join the prestigious bureaucratic cadre in the country one day. Exploitation, deceit, and betrayal are his tactics to get what he wants, even if it's sexually exploiting the poor housemaid. He promises to marry her in exchange for sexual favors, and she becomes his mistress. Sajida also notices their relationship; when she visits her quarter, a weird smell overcomes her. The next time Taji comes to her room, she asks her:

> Taji, I smelled something like fresh blood when I visited your quarter the other day. Did Khala Bi sacrifice a black hen? Baji, why would she spend money on sacrificing animals? Believe it or not, it was me who was sacrificed that night. She stood up, smashing the cigarette under her foot, and left, trying to control her tears."[36]

For Kazim, however, Taji is just an object of pleasure, as he tells Sajida, explaining how Taji aborted her pregnancy: "If I didn't take advantage of her, someone else would. She came to this world for this purpose. She is happy;

what else does she need? A good life! She wouldn't even think of any human relations. And you are talking about remains of the unborn decaying in the garbage dump. No one questions their demise."[37]

Taji, the house servant, is also a migrant from India. But her migration story reveals the miseries of lower classes: " ... then Pakistan became a reality, riots started, everyone forgot brotherhood and kinship, my mother pushed me toward a caravan going to Pakistan and said find a gentleman in your country. Then she disappeared with someone else. Taji started crying."[38]

Instead of helping Taji against Kazim's sexual assaults, Khala Bi and Malik act as if nothing happened. To rub salt into the wound, they manage to abort it every time she gets pregnant to save the family "honor." Taji's health deteriorates as she gets pregnant again. Sajida takes her to the hospital. This time, however, she could not help Taji much as she passed away. This episode leaves several questions in the reader's mind and exposes the hypocrisies of all the family members, even those sympathetic to Tjai. Family honor seems more critical for Khala Bi and Malik than the life of a lower-class servant. But why did Sajida, Nazim, Amman Bi, and Salima do nothing to get the victim out of the exploitative situation? The attitude reflects a typical middle-class response to burning social issues, who fail to act beyond sloganeering.

The novel juxtaposes family experiences and tensions with political developments in the country. As the story unfolds, the founder of Pakistan passes away, leaving a new era of political uncertainty behind him. Nazim tries to make sense of the ongoing political chaos when he says others would be able to lead the nation, and it's not that bad:

> So strange! People think this country will go down after Quaid-e Azam's death. Why don't they realize that this nation's foundation was laid by so many people? How can you forget the sacrifices of others when one leader passes away? But, mourning aside, isn't it a bad omen for the nation?"[39]

But later, it is Nazim who reacts to national crises critically when the government tries to silence writers and journalists. The state now reacts harshly to people's responses, even though they do not criticize the government. Intellectuals are being arrested for even constructive criticism.

Nazim was working as a government Rehabilitation Officer. His job was to help the migrant families settle in the new country by allotting properties and homes in exchange for their properties back in India. However, he couldn't handle the daily affairs of bribery and illegal transitions. So, notwithstanding the pressure, he resigned to become a college professor. Explaining why he left the prestigious job to his family, he says he would have gone crazy if he had stayed there. Salima and Sajida understand his disappointment, but for the rest of the family members, he is a crazy person already.

However, as a progressive person, he is involved in political activism. The government arrests and imprisons him in the historical Mughal fort in Lahore, now being used as an infamous prison. His comments on the history of the Lahore Fort, against the backdrop of his imprisonment, remind the reader that little has changed after the partition:

"Love and hate, everything was behind bars. Music and dancing on one side of the fort and rebels being tortured on the other. Centuries have passed, but things never changed. Celebrations, praising words, and jails."[40]

Mendacities of several kinds have become part of Pakistani society since the partition. In a collective society like Pakistan, financial and political favors to your kinship group and friendship circles have become a way of life. Bribery has become a common social practice for accomplishing even a minor task. Real estate has become the most profitable business in Pakistan, and the land-grabbing mafia is busy occupying profitable land for residential or commercial purposes. At the political level, favors to your party comrades, family members, or friends are common. The tax break, illegal contracting, and getting loans not to be paid are part of social expectations in Pakistan.

Through its characters and plot, *Zameen* masterfully exposes social mendacities at personal and public levels. Malik's family becomes a reflection of societal immoralities in a micro-level setting. After a tense verbal exchange between the two brothers, Kazim unleashes his criticism on Nazim: "Brother, you are wandering in the imaginative bazaar of humanity with empty pockets. My goal for life is to have happiness and luxury."[41]

His comments start an intense exchange of hard words between Kazim and his cousin Salima:

Why only you are the owner of happiness, my brother? Salima asks Kazim in clear terms.

> Oh, Salima Baji, it looks like my brother has also inflicted your thoughts with venom. Isn't it better if you speak less Kazim? I am who I am, and no one can change me. Your heart is full of hate for women; Salima looked at the other side with anger."[42]

Sajida, who worries about the ongoing corruption in society, takes the reader to the national epidemic of bribery in a soliloquy episode:

"What would happen to the nation, when bureaucracy rules and democratic norms pale. Expect calamities when everything comes down to bribery."[43]

Sajida is stunned by another incident when one day, she comes across her schoolmate in India, Anwari. But to her surprise, Anwari pleads not to reveal her past to others. Her father, who used to sell water door to door, has become a wealthy landowner in the new homeland. She is worried that Sajida would tell others about their previous life:

"No, Baji, I am scared. Nobody knows here that I am a poor man's daughter who delivered water in India. Baji, Abba (father) has changed his name too, and he is now Sarwar Hussain. Please don't tell anyone, Baji."[44]

Mendacity has also made its way into the family. Malik, the family patriarch, owned a huge mansion in Lahore, although he sold his property reasonably to a local Hindu in India. Nazim, in his typical satirical style, reminds his father:

"What did we get here?" Then he sat down calmly. What did we get here? Nothing other than this four- Kanal[45] mansion and its belongings. Thank God you sold your house to Krishan for a reasonable price with its belongings. . . . . Nazim's tongue was running like a sharp knife."[46]

The novel ends with a shocking revelation to Sajida. She notices a person resembling Salahuddin, her long-lost love when she visits the mansion, which is now Kazim's office. Salahuddin seems busy trying to have an appointment with Kazim, who has become a senior bureaucrat. She desperately tries to talk to him, but after ignoring her, Salahuddin finally recognizes her, and both start talking about the past. When she tells him Kazim is her brother-in-law, he gets more interested in knowing about her, expecting that she will help him get an appointment with him. What happens next becomes the biggest setback of her life. He tells Sajida:

"I live in Sargodha, and I have lots of lands, orchards spread over10 Murabas[47] with best oranges, pure, red blood in color. My wife also brought 25 Murabas in dowery. Both of us are now big landlords in our area. Government officers stay at our home."[48]

This depressing end becomes a shocking reminder to Sajida and readers that migrancy can change people's outlook toward life, for better or worse. Migrancy, after all, is not just about changing living conditions; it's also about changing the attitude and expectations; it becomes a perennial search for a better life, even though it means crossing the boundaries of moralities and human decencies.

Patriarchy, as a system, controls women's life socially, economically, and legally. Here is a male head of the family who decides every aspect of women's lives, including marriage, education, social relations, and her children's future. Her husband, brother, or son can take this role when the family patriarch is absent. In rare cases, when women become financially independent, their status remains the same because patriarchal structures keep them under men's oppressive control.

Class struggle is central to women's rights and social equality. Talking about women's status in the late capitalistic society, American feminist Barbara Ehrenreich says, "class struggle occurs in every arena where the interests of classes conflict, including education, health, art, music, etc. We aim to transform not only the ownership of the means of production but the totality of social existence."[49]

In Pakistan, however, patriarchy becomes more oppressive when religion becomes the state's ideological tool with its preindustrial and late feudalistic conditions. Analyzing the process of Islamization in Pakistan, Amina Jamal articulates: "It is a gendered discourse of citizenship that facilitated the emergence of a particular type of society in a manner that institutionalized the existing inequalities of gender, class, and religion."[50]

Fawzia Afzal Khan, in her new book *Siren Song*, explores the status of women vocalists in Pakistan, those who migrated from India, and those born in Pakistan.[51] Interestingly, their audience loves the music they perform, not necessarily the performer. Famous Singers such as Roshan Ara Begam, Malka Pukhraj, and Noor Jahan struggled throughout their careers to shed the cultural baggage of the Mirasi background that occupies a lower status in the social hierarchy. Noor Jahan, however, because she was a famous playback singer and film star, shed this image despite her bold gestures in rejecting the role of a traditional wife.

Thus, the elite discourse of male dominance "in which the nation is an extension of the private domain where man's honour is tied to keeping 'their' women in a kind of *pardah* (a state of seclusion or secrecy; a socio-religious practice screening men from women or strangers."[52]

Women's education, marriage, and status become a paramount concern of the patriarch, who would follow the social traditions to keep his image in society as a respectable patriarch. Still, in reality, he is more concerned about his honor. Sajida recalls her childhood friend and schoolmate Anwari, whose father did not allow her to continue her education. He was least concerned about her well-being but his image as a moderate person who cares about his daughter's education:

"Kallo Baba would say proudly; I confined her to purdah. I don't care if relatives ridicule my decision, but people have gone crazy, they whistle when they see her. She will take the class 10 exam privately now. I love to educate so I can feel proud in society."[53]

Culturally oriented predispositions also lead to a greater degree of violence against women. Honor killings, murders, rapes, sexual assaults, acid throwing, burning, and other crimes have been growing at an unprecedented level in Pakistan. According to a study, 8,548 of these cases were registered nationally in 2009, a substantial increase from the previous year.[54]

Patriarchy also makes women vulnerable to sexual exploitation when men take advantage of their power and victims' vulnerabilities. Kazim, one stormy night, comes into Sajida's room and locks the door:

> "Sajida looked at him, his eyes were hungry, and he looked like a thirsty man. She thought the storm had arrived. Kazim, this is not Taji's quarter; get out of my room. You are in the wrong place. She was trembling in rage. She reached Kazim's collar pushing him toward the wall with full force, and before he knew what happened, she hit the door open and ran out to the corridor."[55]

This incident further exposed her vulnerability as she witnessed how Kazim exploits Taji sexually and gets away with it. Nevertheless, she considers Nazim's proposal seriously and decides to go for it. She accepts another as her savior to escape one man's sexual suppression.

Feudalism remains a powerful institution in Pakistan that makes women economically dependent on the feudal lord. Sajida and Nazim, after their marriage, rent a house in another neighborhood, where both become friendly with a feudal family next door. The novel narrates this episode revealing absurdities of the feudalistic system:

> The feudal Lord's wife, Lali, became Sajida's friend. She was nominally educated and was very impressed with Sajida. However, whenever her husband thinks about the piece of land her father promised as dowry but didn't deliver, he starts beating her. She usually visits Sajida whenever it happens to share her grief. She cries, showing her wounds and cursing her father."[56]

But Lali lives a comfortable life and justifies her husband's brutality, probably a face-saving mechanism.

In another chapter, Taji tells Sajida about her previous job with a feudal family: "I used to work for a landlord who had three wives. He brought one from Nakhlow (Lakhnow). She was like a doll. Two of them united against the third one. No one would talk to her. So I used to sit with her after my work. We both were lonely, Baji."[57]

Class and economic power further strengthen patriarchal oppression, and when the two blend, it creates a double jeopardy for women. Sajida, aware of this, tries to console Taji, the poor house servant: "Taji, the poor are not born poor; they are made. Their world will change one day. When oppression reaches its height, it disappears."

Believing in a bright future seems to be the only option left for Taji when she tells Salima:

"I work so hard, Baji, – - if you do that, then suddenly she was silent. My days will come too, as they say; even garbage dumps transform into something else after 12 years; I am a human being after all."[58]

As we have seen above, women's lower status can also be attributed to their lack of economic autonomy and dependence on the patriarch. It takes power and control away from women and transfers financial resources to the patriarch. Asian Development Bank, discussing the plight of women in Pakistan, concludes one of its reports with these comments:

> Women lack ownership of productive resources. Despite women's legal rights to own and inherit property, very few women have access to and control these resources. For example, a micro-level survey of 1,000 rural households in 1995 in Punjab found that only 36 women owned the land, while only 9 had control over it.[59]

When combined with class and feudalistic impositions in South Asia and Pakistan, patriarchy works as a more ruthless system for women. Khadija Mastoor, with her masterstrokes, conveys the same patriarchal brutalities as a bright painter.

Coming back to the novel's beginning at the Walton Refugee Camp, women's social status becomes more obvious when Nazim tells the older man helplessly screaming in search of his kidnapped daughter:

"Baba, looking for your daughter? She was no more a daughter; she became the most precious treasure of the loot. She can't hear your screaming and won't come back to you."[60]

Sajida's comments on the disappearance of the older man's daughter testify severity of the patriarchal suppression and the role of other male members of society:

"The first man plunders, the second one criticizes it, and the third goes crazy to mourn the loot and – "[61]

Andrew Whitehead, a former BBC Correspondent in India, sums up the fate of women in patriarchy within the context of the novel:

> The novel is Sajidah's story: she is a woman of dignity and courage who achieves some happiness, but whose life blighted by Partition and by women's lack of agency over their own lives and bodies. She is not abducted in the sense of being snatched and taken away – the fate of tens of thousands of women amidst the trauma which so grievously stained the fate of independence of India and Pakistan – but her fate amounts to match the same.[62]

Conclusion

For political analyst Ayesha Jalal, the religious divide in India was politically triggered:

> There is nothing inherently unresolvable about religious differences as far as spiritual or scriptural matters are concerned. It is the politics built around the rhetoric of religious differences that have to be offset with narratives of interfaith harmony, but that is only possible if there is an actual desire to replace conflict with dialogue aimed at mutual understanding and social peace.[63]

Instead of becoming a cause for celebration, freedom from colonial rule, unfortunately, resulted in civil riots of a monumental proportion. This massive migration, probably one of the largest in human history, will also be remembered as a dark period of subcontinental history that took the lives of around one million people on both sides of the border.

Compared with the freedom movement of South Africa, where the visionary leadership of Nelson Mandela was able to avoid a bloody conflict between white and black communities, the political leadership in the subcontinent miserably failed to avert the mass-scale massacre. Regretfully, the

Muslim League and Indian National Congress were unable to shed their parochial and religious baggage in charting a peaceful vision for their homeland.

Khadija Mastoor's novel, *Zameen*, narrates Pakistan's story, which becomes an ideological nation what Aysha Siddiqa calls a hybrid-authoritarian and hybrid-theocratic state.[64] As expected, the faith-based ideological thrust gave rise to Pakistan's militancy, terrorism, and factional violence. In this environment, ideological tenets of the state determined boundaries for women within the four walls of their homes. Patriarchy promoted and sponsored gender roles and women's public and private space. Patriarchy was also strengthened through cultural, economic, and legal structures. While this was happening, the security establishment became the sole proprietor of the promised land.

Juxtaposing national politics with the characters and plot, the novel reveals parallels between fiction and realities. In this sense, family tensions become a microcosm of the political chaos spanned over 40 years when the novel was published. The author, a migrant herself, also witnessed the moral decay of her country with its mendacities, political circus, and gender-based inequalities in the aftermath of the partition.

The novelist's fictional characters also seem to personify national leaders and the administrative top brass. The family patriarch, Malik, justifies mendacities and moral decay, which ultimately overshadows the honest family members. Kazim, Khala Bi, and Malik represent the corrupt middle class that also personifies the civil and military leadership. On the other hand, Nazim, Sajida, and Salima are the voices of conscience who, at every phase, argue for morality at the micro-family and macro-national levels. In doing so, however, they suffer throughout the novel in terms of social dejection, economic deprivation, and even the state brutalities in Nazim's case.

Taji, the house servant, exemplifies the poor working-class vulnerable to economic and sexual exploitations. As a helpless female servant abandoned by her mother, she is the easy target for sexual abuse by influential male characters. Yet, pathetically, the other family members, including Nazim, Salima, Sajida, and Amman Bi, always sympathize with her but do nothing to get her out of the exploitative situation.

The theoretical model proposed earlier elaborated on the creation of an ideological state due to the partition based on the religious divide of the subcontinent. Citizens of the newly created state soon witnessed mendacities at a higher level. The faith-based ideological thrust supporting the patriarchal social structure reinforced a male-dominated society. As we have seen, Khadija Mastoor, a skillful storyteller, brings forth patriarchy and mendacity as her conceptual foundations of the novel.

However, as the novel highlights, this ideological emphasis reflects society's narrow definition of religion. Rather than creating a society based on a moral high ground of honesty and social justice, it promotes ritualistic and emotional dimensions of faith. After the partition, mendacities of several forms, including bribery, corruption, and false property claims, became an accepted norm and a desirable trait in government and non-government sectors. These two themes appear again and again throughout the novel.

Additionally, Khadija exclusively deals with the status of women in a Muslim society. It exposes contradictions, cruelties, and hypocrisies of a male-dominated social order determined to use its power and control, denying equal rights to half of the population. In a predominantly feudal social structure, women became property owned by men. Consequently, the legal, social, and economic structure supported this male dominance over women.

Daisy Rockwell, who translated *Zameen* into English, also identifies similar observations when she summarizes the novel:

> Here, Mastur takes on the promises made and broken within the state of Pakistan after its creation and offers a scathing feminist critique of the neo-feudalism that takes hold of the society post-Partition. What does the thirst for ownership of land and counting one's acres mean for women in this new country? How does the promise of Pakistan as a place of safety for all Indian Muslims maintain that egalitarian ideal in the face of greed for territory? And what provisions are there for the safety and independence of women in a patriarchal system that views women as possessions less valuable than parcels of land?[65]

Looking at the bright side of the picture, more women have become part of the workforce in Pakistan during the last 74 years, and some have also made their way into nontraditional professions. They also have more access to education, and some new regulations have been introduced to improve their status in society. In addition, women have become more vocal in protesting their suppression in social settings, within the family, and at the workplace. Patriarchy, however, remains a dominant force within the context of Pakistan.

Once, someone asked the known progressive poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz if Pakistan would thrive or collapse in the longer run. He responded the nation would neither thrive nor collapse but survive. This prophetic statement still seems accurate, which is the novel's overall conclusion. It ends without closure to the plot with no winner or loser in the traditional fictional sense. In a way, the end confirms the prevailing status quo in society at large. Thus, the saga of the partition continues to this day with its ambiguities, and the prevailing status quo, in the case of Pakistan.

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Lollywood on partition: surprise departures, anticipated arrivals

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ABSTRACT

Lollywood, or Lahore-based film industry, rarely explores the uneasy topic of the Partition. Hardly a dozen films could be produced in the last seven decades on the Partition. However, a few Lollywood productions – notably Punjabi-language Kartar Singh (1959) – either exploring the Partition or set in the context of the Partition, have surprisingly departed from business-as-usual and state-sponsored discourses whereby India/Hindu is otherified and villainized. It is even more interesting, this paper notes, that all the productions examined for this study drew huge audiences and were indeed successful ventures in terms of popularity. Hence, the contention of this paper is that Lollywood has reproduced as well as resisted the official narratives on the Partition. Arguably, the Partition in Pakistani films has been delineated in its complexity. Most importantly, these productions approach the plight of women with a humanist viewpoint. Methodologically, this paper establishes its argument through a discourse analysis of four films.

Introduction

In the case of partitioned societies such as Pakistan, which twice mutated in a span of 24 years (1947, 1971), the cultural narratives play at least two important roles if one goes by Joe Cleary.[1] These narratives play the role of a medium to memorialize the trauma of the Partition besides justifying/contesting partitionist mentalities generated by such divisions.[2] In other words, these narratives carry the value of an imaginative truth. Hence, to make sense of the Indo-Pak Partition, the events of 1947 cannot be seen in isolation. These events have been turned into journalistic narratives, intellectual discourses, literary and cultural productions, textbooks, and cinematic images in an ongoing manner. Curiously, Lollywood, once a vibrant film industry, has shied away from exploring the Partition. While an early and artistically impressive attempt was made already in 1959, only ten films have been produced over a period of seven decades.[3]

This paper aims at placing Lollywood's depiction of the Partition on the scholarly agenda, an otherwise under-researched area, in order to expand the debate on cultural industries' role in sustaining as well as countering the hegemonic view of the Partition in Pakistan. Accordingly, the task of this paper is to

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explore the cinematic depiction of the fateful Partition in order to examine the role of cultural apparatus[4] and what Louis Althusser calls "Ideological State Apparatuses" (ISAs) in order to understand Lollywood's role in delineating the Partition. This is indeed vital because the Partition is not only the foundational stone in imaging Pakistan as an "Islamic Zion" but is, arguably, the most important memory project nourished and sustained by the Pakistani state to maintain a hegemonic hold over mass imagination. In this memory project, the other (the "Hindu" who seduced the Sikh in "his" project of Muslim victimization) wanted to avert the Partition. However, when the division of India became unavoidable owing to a heroic and an iconic Indian-Muslim leadership, the Partition was bloodied and ethnically cleansed to punish the Muslim/Pakistani. Hence, the research task of this paper is to answer the following question: How has Lollywood cinematized the events of the 1947 Partition in relation to official Partition discourses in Pakistani polity?

Answering the above question, this study argues that the Partition on Pakistani cinema screen has often departed from statist narratives amplified by the ISAs and cultural apparatuses at least on two counts. First, the Hindus and the Sikhs have not been necessarily otherized in these productions. Second, the Partition is often problematized instead of depicting it as an oversimplified notion of a Muslim victimhood in line with the mainstream notion of the Partition. The dissenting voices in Lollywood deserve special attention owing to a stifling and suffocating censorship Lollywood has always been subjected to. The scope of this study is limited to analyze the discourse, from a Marxist perspective, of four Lollywood productions. They include *Kartar Singh* (1959), *Lakhon Mein Aik* (1967), *Jinnah* (1998), and *Khamosh Pani* (2003). These films have been selected based on their popularity among the Pakistani audiences.

Discourse, according to Fairclough & Fairclough[5] "is basically social use of language in social context." However, discourse cannot be reduced to language. In fact, discourse is both a source of language and a product of it. It is a source when "people's generalizations about language are made on the basis of the discourse they participate in."[6] It is a product of language when "people apply what they already know in creating and interpreting new discourse."[7] More comprehensively, discourse implies "meaningful symbolic behavior,"[8] which, on the one hand, incorporates discourse both as a source and product of language; on the other hand, this behavior grounds the discourse in the "social context" Faircloughs speaks about. Discourse analysis is an extensive domain. Viewed as a triangulated examination of language and practice in social context, discourse analysis in this study implies "an open-ended heuristic, a research method consisting of a set of topics to consider in connection with any instance of discourse." It is a method that asks questions about "social roles and relations, power and inequality, communication, and identity."[9] This method is theoretically informed by a Marxist perspective. To quote Ahmed, "Marxism explains

the behavior of hegemonic powers through a primary focus on the economic interests, the existence of a class system and the role of state in representing and serving the ruling class or classes."[10] The Marxist approach emphasizes, among other factors, the role of ideas and ideologies in evolution and development of discourses. Ideology, in turn, is associated with the process of social reproduction.[11] To be exact: "Ideologies contribute to the stabilization of certain conditions and relations of production."[12] The source of ideology is the division of labor. This division of labor entails a division of interests. Ideology defends the interests of the power elite as generalized interests. Hence, on the one hand, ideology is viewed as "false," on the other, interest is of essence. Consequently, the Marxist tradition conceptualizes discourse "as the ideological cover for material and class interests."[13] Since the "Marxist concept of ideology always refers to some kind of falsity,"[14] hence a Marxist approach in discourse studies not merely exposes the falsity of discourses but also critiques the very conditions that generate and require false ideologies/discourses in order to offer alternative discourses. In this paper, I treat Lollywood productions as a text grounded in "Partition" discourse. A text, according to Said[15] purports "to contain knowledge about something actual … Expertise is attributed to it … such texts can *create* not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe … In time such knowledge and reality produce a tradition … a discourse."

Furthermore, the "Partition" below has been theorized anew not only to conceptually anchor this research but also to extend the debate on the Partition of India in 1947. Section one is devoted to this theoretical endeavor besides covering selective scholarly literature on the topic. Section two will narrate the plots of film productions under review. Next, an analysis will be offered (Section three) before concluding this study.

Section 2: a theory of partition

Pakistan's film industry from the Partition perspective has rarely been explored.[16] This is despite the fact that the Partition in the context of the Indian subcontinent is inescapable. From family histories to school syllabi, the Partition is often a starting point. Likewise, cultural commissars as well as scholars continue sculpting the Partition, often, in line with their ideological bent of mind. Oftentimes, the Partition is viewed as an event. Unlike India, scholars in Pakistan have not viewed the Partition as an existing, ongoing process constituting identity, politics, and ideological discourses.

A snowballing repertoire of discourses on the Partition emerging in Pakistan (diaspora ensconced in western academia included), despite mutual disagreements and occasionally an impressive rigor in documenting the events of 1947, stubbornly fails to characterize and conceptualize the Partition itself.

Notably, these scholars on the topic have simply ignored the necessity to define and theorize the Partition let alone view it as a phenomenon beyond British India even when countries in the neighborhood (China, Taiwan, Hong Kong) have either undergone partitions or the specter of division – arguably as a colonial legacy – haunts the others (Sri Lanka, for instance). On a global scale, Asia, Africa, and Europe continue to grapple with partitions and divisions imposed by departing colonial powers or disintegrating empires. A threat of territorial division remains actual.[17]

To quote Yasmin Khan, "A certain regional myopia on the part of historians has been a block to understanding partition as a global event with very real and important commonalities with other histories, even those of the 1940s."[18] There is, however, growing literature devoted to theorize partition beyond Pakistan.[19] In an attempt to characterize partition, Waterman offers the following definition: "Partition can be said to have occurred when two or more new states are created out of what had previously been a single [administrative] entity and when at least one of the new units claims a direct link with the prior state."[20] According to Jassal and Ben-Ari: "Partition is commonly understood as the violent territorial and political separation of groups, including forced eviction and migration of populations, and the communal and personal price paid by people undergoing these events. Partition refers to much more than processes of forced separation and the creation of distinct political entities. It also forms the basis for long-term practices such as identity, memory, and inspiration, and the very bases on which different societies are organized."[21]

While these definitions have an immense descriptive value, they do not take into account the difference between partitions imposed by the departing colonial empires (such as English, French, or Dutch empires after World War II) and the divisions occurring as a result of disintegrating empires (such as the USSR and Ottoman caliphate). The difference is indeed vital on two counts. Firstly, former empires were modern-day imperialisms (as global expression of national capitalisms) while the USSR or Ottoman caliphate were empires with feudal logic whereby mode of exploitation was not capitalistic. Secondly, partition was deployed by departing colonial empires of the former variety as, to quote Radha Kumar, exit strategies.[22] In the case of the latter category of empires, disintegration of empires entailed territorial disintegration. An exit was not necessarily intended.

Also, in the case of partitions deployed as exit strategies, there is a common structural logic as has been documented by Cleary, "The partitions in Ireland, India and Pakistan all took place at a specific historical conjuncture. In no case did they occur during the long period of imperial rule itself, though the communal antagonisms that would later lead to divisions were indeed whetted and nursed in the racialised structure of the colonial state, and were often cynically manipulated to maintain imperial rule." Hence, he argues about a common

structural logic identifiable in the case of partitions occurring at the end of colonial rules.[23] A similar logic apparently is missing in the case of divisions that resulted when empires of Ottoman or the USSR variety disintegrated. Since such a comparison is beyond the scope of this paper, therefore, a concise effort will be made below to theorize partition in relation to Indian subcontinent.

This paper conceives the Partition of India as a three-step process consisting of *Context*, the *Event* (1947 in the case of Pakistan), and *Memorialization* (such a theorization also helps understand the cultural and ideological reproduction of the Partition).

Context

The Partition is set in motion as a logical outcome of colonial occupation. Initially, the Partition begins to express itself in the form of ethnic/communal/sectarian/confessional differences. As the regime of divide-and-rule consolidates and embeds itself in the colonized territory, the Partition begins to assume flesh and blood. In the case of British India, religious differences were nourished to cementify the colonial hold. It is not the case that the Partition was already on agenda when colonialism entrenched itself. Likewise, the Partition does not pose itself as the only, inevitable outcome. It is the balance of (class and ideological) forces that determines the outcome. Yet, it is the colonialism that sets the stage for the Partition. The next stage is the *Event* of Partition itself.

The event

This event is a consequence of ethnic, communal, and confessional divisions systemically fostered, nursed, and maintained by the colonial apparatus. This is the moment when all pent-up madness in the form of communal hatred is unleashed and an actual rupture occurs and an actual division takes place, no matter how arbitrary and irrational. All the contradictions generated and fostered come to a head. Behind this violent spectacle, colonialism exits. Using the *Event* of Partition as an exit strategy, colonialism absolves itself of the responsibility of the Partition.

Memorialization

In this ongoing, never-ending phase, the postcolonial elite deploys the tragedy of Partition to maintain their class rule by exploiting trauma. To quote R Samaddar, the Partition is "[a]t once an event of the past and a sign of the present, Partition lives on in post-colonial times to such an extent that we should truly prefer the phrase 'partitioned times' to the more common 'post-colonial times.'"[24]

In the case of India and Pakistan, " ... 1947 does not seem to be such a natural cut-off point ... Historians today are paying far more attention to the 'transitional state' and the ways in which partition continued to reverberate in the newly emerging colonial states long after the moment of initial crisis and well into the 1950s." For instance, "allocation of evacuee property went on for decades, debates over citizenship rights lasted many years."[25] Flagging this ongoing, unfolding, and ideological logic of reproducing the Partition, Khan justifiably remarks "much of the work of 'othering,' of stereotyping, of growing religious fundamentalism or of discrimination, snubs, and even ghettoization was affected in the decades after the creation of the new nation-states rather than in the preceding years: in short, that a by-product of partition was an alteration in the dynamics between communities and the reformulation of their own identities."[26] This paper argues that historians need to go beyond viewing the Partition as "transitional state." There is the need to theorize the actual process of reproducing the Partition, through empirical studies, as an ongoing project. This paper is an effort with such an orientation. The role of the ISAs and cultural apparatuses, the actual purpose and task of this paper, assumes centrality in the last stage of this process. It is in this stage the Partition becomes a memory project. This memory project is sustained through all kinds of cultural and discursive practices and knowledge production. Cleary succinctly sums up: "The issue of partition, then, provokes a concatenation of issues directly relevant to the recent efflorescence of writings on colonial and postcolonial societies and on nationalism. Such issues include the nature of the colonial and postcolonial state, the construction of majorities and minorities, and the connection between literature and the nation, culture and the state."[27]

My analysis below also benefits from "media effects" tradition in mass communication research. Commentators such as McQuail have noted, "the entire study of mass communication is based on the premise that the media have significant effects"; however, he adds that "there is little agreement on the nature and extent of these assumed effects."[28] The "media effects" approach has its nemesis in "uses and gratification" tradition in mass communication research. Asking not what media do to people but what people do with the media, "uses and gratification" theory takes us from media to audiences that are not passive but active ones.[29] However, much of the "media effects" tradition rejects the notion of direct effects, i.e. stimulus-response premise; instead, there has been an interest in mediation and intervention as well as physical, social, and cultural contexts of viewing. Klapper[30] points out an even broader framework by way of his "phenomenistic" approach. This approach is a shift away from the tendency to regard mass communication as a necessary and sufficient cause of audience effects, toward a view of the media as influences, working amid other influences, in a total situation. This approach is reflective of Althusser's suggestion that any state has two state apparatuses it

could use: the ISAs and Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs). The ISAs consist of "the education system, the family, the legal system, the political system, the trade unions, the media, and the culture." The RSAs include, "the government, the administration, the army, the police, the courts, the prisons, etc," which function "by violence at least ultimately (since repression, e.g. administrative repression, may take non-physical forms)."[31]

The above theoretical framework helps contextualize and examine the cultural productions in relation to the Partition. Deploying this framework, in the next section this paper will explore the Partition discourses in the four films mentioned above and will offer an analysis in the subsequent section.

Section 3: partition on screen

The four case-studies selected for this research will be presented in this section in the chronological order of their production. Their content will be analyzed in the next section. Beginning with *Kartar Singh*, this section ends with *Khamosh Pani*.

Kartar Singh

The Punjabi-language production *Kartar Singh*, released in 1959 on the occasion of Eid-ul-Edha, enjoys a cult-like status in the history of Pakistani film industry.[32] Not merely a blockbuster in its time, this Punjabi classic, despite poor production quality (owing to a lack of quality infrastructure, at the time, to produce technically sound films), owes its prominence to a number of attributes. For instance, the film music, in particular, a wedding song – *Desaa'N da Raja* – remains an integral part of wedding festivities in Pakistan. Acting performances, notably, by Alauddin playing Kartar Singh in the film was/is considered an ultimate case of showmanship. Above all, thematically as an against-the-grain film with a popular appeal makes *Kartar Singh* a unique case study in the Pakistani context. This black-and-white talkie was produced and directed by Saifuddin Saif. Himself a refugee from Amritsar, a town in East Punjab just across the border, Saifuddin Saif was an accomplished poet and a Marxist intellectual, active in literary circles.

Set in a Punjabi village somewhere in what is now East Punjab, the film depicts an India on the cusp of the fateful Partition. Like any other community in a Punjabi village at the time, there are Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims. Likewise, there are also caste divisions. Unaware of stormy events shaking the larger British India, the villagers are living in an exemplary communal harmony. The protagonist-villain Kartar Singh (Alauddin, also a leftist) is the only thorn in the side of the entire village. He is a thuggish character, always ready for a brawl. While the entire village fears Kartar Singh and prefers

avoiding him, Umer Din (Sudhir)[33] a chivalrous Muslim and World War II veteran, is always there to defend the weak and vulnerable villagers against Kartar Singh's excesses. He has returned from Burma front and is now settled back in the village. Kartar Singh would not pay any heed to Vaid Prem Nath's (Zareef, a popular comedian but played an unusually serious role) advice either. A Hindu (evident from the name), Vaid Ji – as he is reverentially called – is universally respected also because he is the medicineman in the village. Before long, this peaceful village is also convulsed by the larger Partition troubles. The madness of the Partition violence forces the Muslim villagers to plan migration to Pakistan. As the society descends into madness marked by dislocation, rioting, arson, and absurdities of the highest order, Umer Din's sister (Laila) is kidnapped, while a teen-aged brother goes missing.

The kidnapper is a Sikh, but before he is able to violate her "honour," she is rescued by the kidnapper's father who kills his own son to rescue her. Meanwhile, Umer Din, along with his paramour (Musarat Nazir) on reaching Pakistan, joins the border security police. While patrolling the border, he one day spots Kartar Singh entering Pakistan for a booty. In an encounter with border police, Kartar Singh sustains bullet injuries. However, Umer Din instead of arresting him, let Kartar Singh escape for old-time's sake. Obliged, Kartar Singh undergoes a change of heart. He decides to reunite Umer Din and his lost brother left behind in East Punjab. One night as he is entering Pakistan territory, Umer Din spots him yet again and opens gunfire. Kartar Singh dies in the encounter before Umer Din realizes that Kartar Singh was in fact trying to pay back an act of kindness by reuniting the two brothers. Notably, *Kartar Singh* was also imported into India and became very popular in East Punjab.

Lakhon Main Aik (One in a Million)

The black-and-white Urdu-language production *Lakhon Main Aik* (*LMA* now on) was released in 1967 and proved to be a blockbuster. It received six Nigar Awards, considered a local version of the Academy Awards. Directed by Raza Mir and scripted by Zia Sarhadi,[34] the film is set in "Azad Kashmir" ("Independent Kashmir"), i.e. Pakistan Administered Kashmir, and the plot revolves around two friends: Ahmed (Talish) and Hardayal (unidentified actor). The film begins with the chants of Allah-o-Akbar. A busload of refugees arrives in Azad Kashmir from India. Ahmed is waiting for the bus because his wife Razia (not shown in the film) and son Mehmoud are supposed to return from Poonch. It just happens that Ahmed's family (wife and son) happens to be on the Indian side (the wife and son had gone to maternal family for a routine re-union). When they were returning, a fanatic Hindu mob butchers the wife and wife's family although teen-aged Mehmoud manages to escape. He is adopted by a Pushton truck driver (Saqi). Mehmoud grows up to play the typical hero (Ejaz Durrani) in the film.

Meantime, Ahmed's village-fellow and friend, Hardyal, a Hindu, has his daughter Shakuntala (Shamim Ara) gone missing. Ahmed advises, in fact helps, Hardyal escape to India since Hindu/Indian "excesses were provoking people here too." As the rioting begins, a Muslim mob in the village finds out that Ahmed was sheltering a Hindu girl. The mob turns against Shakuntala. However, Ahmed refuses to hand her over to the mob despite his personal loss. He shames the mob by reminding them that they were the followers of Prophet Muhammad who taught his Ummah to be compassionate toward women and children even if he ordered Jihad. Fast forward to the 1960s: as is expected in highly predictable Lollywood productions, Mehmoud on board his truck arrives Shakuntala's (and his own) village and the two fall in love. However, the two have different religions. After all, Ahmed raised Shakuntala as a Hindu and never tried to convert her to Islam. But before the two are married, Hardyal returns to bring his daughter to India (it remains vague whether the other side is India or Indian-administered Kashmir).

Why he did not return before? Because on the other side, when he found the Hindu fanatics assassinating innocent Muslims, he tried to persuade them not to attack the Muslims. For his friendliness for the Muslims, he was sent to a mental asylum. Only after serving a long term at the mental asylum, he was released. Hence, the delay. While Shakuntala is not happy to go to India, she is emotionally blackmailed by Ahmed and Mehmoud to leave alongwith her father. On arriving theother side, her life becomes a living hell. The Hindus do not accept her as she is considered impure for being brought up by a Muslim foster parent. Hence, unclean. No family is ready to accept her as a daughter-in-law. Her virginity is also suspected as rumors of her love affair had arrived along with her arrival. Alienated and marginalized, she 1 day tells Hardyal: "I am an insult to them here [in India]. I want to go back [to 'Azad Kashmir'] where they respected my religion." However, Madhu (Mustafa Qureshi), a forest officer, takes a fancy and is ready to marry her despite her reputation. But he is not in love with her. He only wants to satiate his lust. In his bid to marry Shakuntala, who does not like him, Madhu seeks the help of the village priest. The priest is corrupt, scheming, cunning, and hates the Muslims. After the marriage, Madhu proves to be a terrible husband. Not merely he is violent but is also utterly disrespectful toward Hardyal. Most importantly, he is jealous of Mehmoud and suspects that Shakuntala is secretly in love with Mehmoud. He plots to kill Mehmoud and traps him to come to the Line of Control (LoC), border dividing Kashmir. As the two engage in a gunfight, Shakuntala receives bullet injuries and dies, while the villain is killed by the hero.

Jinnah

It is a bilingual production (English and Urdu) released in 1998. In a strict sense, it is not a Pakistani film production. It was produced by a London-based company but financed by the Pakistani state. The genesis of film's idea also deserves a mention here. *Jinnah* was a second-coming of S*tand Up From The Dust*, a film on the life of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, founder of Pakistan. The project S*tand Up From The Dust* began as a response to the success of Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi*. The National Film Development Corporation (NAFDEC), now defunct, was tasked with the production of S*tand Up From The Dust*. The NAFDEC was a federal body established in 1973 by the government of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto to help develop the film industry. Although the project was shelved, the instructions passed to the director explicitly express Partition discourse officially propagandized. "The film opens with a shot of Arab warriors, riding on horses and led by a young man, all carrying swords in their hands, appearing from the Arabian sea. The commentary informs that it was young Arab General Muhammad bin Qasim who conquered Sindh . . . and that was the genesis of Pakistan."[35]

Notably, *Jinnah* as S*tand Up From The Dust's* avatar radically departs from an Islamized-Jinnah and Partition-as-Muslim-victimization as envisioned in the early response to *Gandhi*. Directed by Jamil Dehlavi and scripted by Pakistani-origin academic Akbar S. Ahmed, *Jinnah* was financed and patronized by an interim government, in 1997, spearheaded by President Farooq Leghari. It is not an uncommon incident in the case of an apocryphal postcolonial state: President Leghari and Akber S. Ahmed happened to be college fellows and friends. Both went to Lahore's prestigious, colonial era missionary project, Forman Christian College. Both joined the prestigious civil services. However, while the former turned to politics, the latter landed an academic position in the UK and later the USA. Such personalized details are also important to understand that *Jinnah*'s audience is international/English-speaking world rather than domestic. Hence, *Jinnah*'s Jinnah – unlike Jinnah in mercifully deshelved *Stand Up from The Dust* – is a rather secularized and liberal Muslim.

The film begins with a commentary on the Partition. Strikingly important, the narrator is played by Bollywood star Shashi Kapoor. At the outset, it is pointed out that historians, internationally, have been unfair not to recognize Jinnah's genius and greatness. The narrator evaluates him at par with Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. The latter, in the opening sequence, is shown rendezvousing Edwina Mountbatten. Jinnah does not want this secret meeting scandalized. He considers it a private affair. His liberalist credentials are further highlighted in another sequence when young Jinnah and his wife Ruti Jinnah have been invited to Viceroy's party. Lightly dressed Ruti is ridiculed by Viceroy's wife for exposing too much flesh. Likewise, Jinnah and the Muslim fundamentalists are cast as bitter enemies. In fact,

Khaksars, a Muslim fundamentalist project inspired by Germany's Nazi party, plots to assassinate Jinnah during his visit to Lahore. Hence, on the one hand, his struggle for a Muslim homeland is undermined by the Muslim clergy, and he is up against the might of the Indian National Congress (INC), patronized by the colonial authorities, on the other, not merely Mountbattens are decidedly pro-INC/Hindu, the entire colonial bureaucracy is on the side of scheming Hindus. Evidence? The boundary commission headed by Sir Cyril Radcliffe.

The INC/Hindus are scheming and fanatic as well as brutal and undemocratic. Jinnah in his early political career tried to unify the Hindu-Muslim communities. He was hailed by the INC leadership as an ambassador for Hindu-Muslim unity. But he is betrayed by the INC repeatedly. Hence, Jinnah is left with no choice but to seek a separate homeland for the Muslims. Finally, the Partition. The Partition (depicted as an event) is violent and mad. Muslims pay the price of violence spearheaded by the Hindus who are assisted by the Sikhs. They have to relocate and bravely sacrifice to realize their dream. Tragically, Jinnah dies soon after the Partition and the cruel postcolonial state is responsible for his untimely departure for not providing emergency medical aid. His death is almost an assassination by sophisticated means.

Khamosh Pani (Silent Waters)

Released in 2003, *Khamosh Pani* was banned in Pakistan even before it was submitted for a screening certificate to the Film Censor Board. According to the director, Sabiha Sumar, the apparent reason for banning *Khamosh Pani*, was an Indian actress Kirron Kher in the film cast. Since Indian films were banned, Sumar was informed; hence, Indians in the cast implied *Khamosh Pani* was not a Pakistani production. However, when the ban was imposed on the commercial release, Sumar founded a mobile theater and organized the film screening across the country, focusing on villages and small towns. "Thousands of people watched that film. They watched it from wherever they could: from the rooftop of buses, buildings, trees or over each other's shoulders. They saw the film, enjoyed themselves and, most importantly, asked questions," she claims.[36] Like *Jinnah, Khamosh Pani* is arguably not really a Lollywood production, technically. Filmed in Pakistan with largely a Pakistani cast, the technical crew is European as is the production company. However, its entry in the film festivals as a Pakistani production justifies it as a case study for this research.

Khamosh Pani center-stages the life of Ayesha (Kirron Kher) and her son Salim (Sarfraz), and point of departure is Pakistan in 1979. Like 1971, when the country was dismembered, the year 1979 is also a watershed mark in Pakistan's history. On April 4, 1979, Pakistan's first elected prime minister, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, was sent to the gallows by the military dictator, General

Zia-ul-Haq. The latter on coming to power also initiated a soft-Talibanization of the state and society with grave implication for Pakistani politics and cultural industries.[37]

Ayesha is surviving on her husband's shoe-string pension and humble income she ekes out through Quran lessons to the village children. Salim is semi-literate, jobless, aimless but ambitious. He is looking for a shortcut to fame and glory. One day, Jihadi preachers happen to visit his village, and he is recruited by a fundamentalist group. He grows a beard, starts wearing *shalwar-kameez*, and is busy amplifying Jihadist message. Meanwhile, a delegation of the Sikh Yatris (pilgrims) happens to visit a nearby Sikh temple (Gurdwara). A member of the delegation arrives Ayesha's village. He is looking to meet his sister who went missing during the Partition. Here, the film flashes back to 1947, and Ayesha's tightly held secret is revealed. She was a Sikh girl. As violence, triggered by the Partition, grips the Punjab and the Muslims as well as the Sikhs inflict horrors on each other, Ayesha's family advises her to commit suicide by jumping into a well before she could be kidnapped by the Muslims. She walks all the way to the village well but is too scared to jump to death. As her parents and brothers escape to India, she stays on but as a hostage who converts to Islam and is forced married to Salim's father. Salim is incensed by the arrival of the Sikh delegation, but he also seizes their arrival as an opportunity to advance his politics. He initiates an agitation against the Sikh Yatris. However, Ayesha's past is also revealed to him through a chance meeting with his maternal uncle. Devastated, he commits suicide by jumping into the well.

Section 4: discussion

Since 1947, the Pakistani film industry has produced nearly 5000 films (Sohail, 2019). Only 10, in a way 8 (excluding *Jinnah* and *Khamosh Pani*), films explore the Partition.[38] This indicates Lollywood's disinterest in the topic. What explains this disinterest is beyond the scope of this research. It will require a study with a political economic approach to answer such a query. The aim of this section is to analyze the discourses in the four films showcased in Section 3 and to examine how these cinematic narrations counter or reinforce the mainstream discourses on the Partition. Before analyzing the four productions in the chronological order maintained in the previous section, first a brief attempt is made to flag the mainstream discourses on the Partition.

The Partition in the mainstream discourses is seen as a beginning, a beginning marked by heroic sacrifices by the Muslims. The Indian Muslims had to cross rivers of blood to arrive Pakistan. The Hindus and the Sikhs were conducting a genocide. The colonial authorities were also siding with the Hindu-INC. All the stakes were against the creation of Pakistan.

Munawwar, a historian whose highly canonized book on Pakistan history issued to the officers of all three services of Pakistan military,[39] argues, "According to Western political theories it is generally a state which gives birth to a nation, *i.e.*, a nation is known, normally, with reference to a state. But in Islam it is religion that creates and builds states. The Muslims of the subcontinent were a nation separate from Hindus on account of religion. They demanded a state to be their independent homeland. They fought for its achievement. And they got it."[40] Hence, it is a community imagined as victim of Hindu-India (the actual other) and its colonial patrons (a distant other). Such discourses based on half-truths and selective memory help imagine the community. After all, Althusser argues, a social formation that does not reproduce the conditions of production at the same time as it produces, does not last. "The ultimate condition of production is therefore the reproduction of the condition of productions." Reproduction of conditions is granted through the RSAs as well as the ISAs.[41]

In view of the above-described ISAisation in Pakistan in relation to the Partition, *Kartar Singh* stands out as a surprise departure. Especially, as a pioneering production on the Partition topic. To quote Ahmed, *Kartar Singh* was "One film dared to probe the Punjab Partition in an unorthodox way and that did not conform to the Pakistani establishment's one-sided standpoint of blaming only Hindus and Sikhs for the violence in 1947 … *Kartar Singh* was a very delicately balanced portrayal of the Partition on the one hand and an expression of a positive aspiration to a separate homeland for Muslims in the subcontinent on the other."[42] The Hindu characters such as Vaid Prem Nath or the village shopkeeper have been portrayed as sincere and caring human beings. Depiction of the Sikhs is also, in general, positive. There are villainous Sikh characters. For instance, the kidnapper is a Sikh. But one who redeems is also a Sikh. Most importantly the villain, Kartar Singh, is also protagonist. He undergoes a change of heart. In this sense, Saifuddin Saif not merely problematizes the Partition but also continues to believe in an innate humanity in human beings regardless of their faith. Depicted as a "collapse of society"[43] this Partition is not merely dislocation (Muslim migration) but old norms of communal harmony, respect for women, friendships, tolerance, syncretic culture, above all writ of the colonial state evaporates overnight.

Unlike *Kartar Singh, LMA* conveniently situates the Partition motif in familiar "us (Muslims) vs them (Hindus)" dichotomy. The film is in fact more about cross-border love and only partially relates to the Partition. However, released in the aftermath of the 1965 Indo-Pak war when *Malangi* (Director: Rashid Akhtar, 1965) had already set a trend to stereotype and otherify the Hindus, *LMA* is an important case study because it justifies the official narratives on the Partition by showing Hindu-India as the enemy and imaging Pakistan as the safe haven for the Muslims of Indian subcontinent. That the film is set in "Azad Kashmir,"[44] another subtext is implicitly

attributed to the Partition in *LMA*. Partition in *LMA* is constructed, in an over simplistic manner, as an "event." It is an event during which the Muslims were ruthlessly slaughtered by heartless Hindus, while the Muslims, despite Hindu provocations, behave with grace and maintain their humanity. It is true they want to snatch Shakuntala from Ahmed, but once convinced that they were wrong, they step back. The importance of *LMA* lies in its reproduction of the Partition. The technique deployed is the otherification of "the Hindu." All the Hindu characters are villainous except Shakuntala and her father Hardyal. The former because she was raised in a Muslim family in "Azad Kashmir" while the latter is part naive, part ignorant of the real Hindu character. After all, Hardyal has lived all his life among a Muslim-dominated part of Kashmir. Most importantly, love and affiliations do not matter. The Hindus belong to India even when they are as innocent as Shakuntala and Hardyal.

The selection of Kashmir as the setting of *LMA* narrative is suggestive also because the Indo-Pak war fought two years before its release was triggered by Jammu-Kashmir dispute. Moreover, as highlighted above, the Punjabi-language blockbuster of its time *Malangi* had already set a trend that the Hindus could be vilified with impunity. The Hindu bashing in the film justifies the creation of Pakistan and the LoC. The message is crudely simplistic: even such Hindus as Shakuntala and her father who do not entertain any hatred for the Muslims are misfits in a Hindu-majority society let alone the Muslims themselves. Hence, Pakistan is not merely legitimate, but in view of the Muslim sacrifices during the "event" of the Partition renders a sacredness to this very legitimate project. The dialogs in the film repeatedly refer to Islamic teachings and official propaganda. For instance, in one sequence, Mahmoud is doing his homework as a school student. He is parroting crude narratives taught in the school curriculum.

While *LMA* offers a crude propagandistic view of the Partition, *Jinnah* is also a typical agitprop production. However, it is highly sophisticated in giving the Partition a clever spin. Hence, in the process, it is both a departure from the mainstream discourse on the Partition as well as a reproduction of it. It sticks by the mainstream discourse by justifying the Partition on confessional basis. In an op-ed, Akbar S. Ahmed himself dispels any doubts: "The idea of making a film on Mr Jinnah was the ambition of many Pakistanis especially after seeing Attenborough's Oscar-winning film *Gandhi* which depicted Jinnah as a villainous caricature. Muslims also needed to answer the question so many were legitimately asking about the compatibility of Islam with democracy. Because I believed Jinnah was the quintessential modern Muslim democrat, his story would answer the question about Islam and democracy. His Pakistan was to be a modern democratic Muslim nation. I began working on a script for *Jinnah* when I arrived at Cambridge University in 1988 to take up the position of the Iqbal Chair."[45] Reminiscing his conversation in 1996 with the then president

about the *Jinnah* project, Ahmed writes "'Beware of the Indians and other enemies of Pakistan,' said Farooq Leghari, the president of Pakistan, looking at me straight in the eye. 'They will do everything possible to destroy your project. They can't stand Mr Jinnah and his achievement of creating Pakistan.'"[46]

Despite or perhaps because of these warnings, *Jinnah* departs from the semiofficial discourse on two counts. First, instead of blaming and otherifying the Hindu/INC, *Jinnah* sidesteps the idiomatic "Pakistan ideology" by blaming the Partition on INC (a discourse also popularized by historian Ayesha Jalal in her work *The Sole Spokesman*). Secondly, and most importantly (since *Jinnah*'s intended audience is global/western), *Jinnah*'s Jinnah is not a puritan, or a fundamentalist, as he has been constructed since the 1980s when the Zia dictatorship, in order to legitimize its soft-Talibanization project, Islamized Jinnah to an extent that one cannot tell the difference between Jinnah and Maulana Moudodi, his nemesis. *Jinnah*'s Jinnah is a liberal, secularist Muslim, at peace with the rest of the world. He is definitely against religious fundamentalism. He did not even want the Partition *per se*. It was the INC that made it impossible for the Indian Muslims to stay on in the united India. Hence, *Jinnah* reproduces the Partition to legitimize Pakistan globally as a historically inevitable reality. Around the theme of the Partition, this biopic is also an effort to satisfy the domestic audience simultaneously by demonstrating that Jinnah/Pakistan are also at par with Gandhi/India only if the entire story is told anew.

Compared to all the above three productions, *Khamosh Pani* is the most radical digression from the Partition discourses churned out by the Pakistani ISAs and cultural apparatuses at least on four counts. For the first, unlike *Kartar Singh* – considered a radical classic – *Khamosh Pani* does not rescue the Muslims. Although *Kartar Singh* does not otherify the Hindus or stereotype the Sikhs, all the key Muslim characters in the film are either victims or humanized human beings with heroic qualities. Oppression and violence is problematized in *Kartar Singh* but is attributed to the Sikhs. No such evasion in *Khamosh Pani*. Ayesha is a living proof of the Muslim culpability. Secondly, *Khamosh Pani* does not view the Partition as one-time "event." In fact, the "Partition" is constructed in this production the way it has been theorized above (Section 2): an ongoing process. Not merely it is an ongoing process, it is also a prolonged trauma for women like Ayesha and for such families as Ayesha's.

Thirdly, *Khamosh Pani* foregrounds a gendered perspective. *Kartar Singh* and *LMA* also point to the price the women pay because of the Partition. However, for instance, in *Kartar Singh* the kidnapping of Umer Din's sister is viewed from the perspective of men's honor. Her kidnapping is depicted as an attack on Umer Din's manhood and nobility. Likewise, she is accepted back

only when they are assured that her virtue is intact. Likewise, *LMA* demonstrates the price Shakuntala has to pay, but her loss of love is mutual. Her lover is also a loser in the process. In *Khamosh Pani*, on the contrary, the burden of the Partition's madness, trauma, and absurdity is carried by the women. In this respect, *Khamosh Pani* can be compared with Indian production *Pinjar* (Director: Chandrapraakash Dwivedi, 2003). Finally, *Khamosh Pani* depicts Islamification of Pakistan as a by-product of faith-based Partition. While even the left wing dissidents in Pakistan have viewed post-partition Pakistan as a case of Partition betrayed (notably, Faiz Ahmed Faiz's iconic poem titled, *Subh e Azadi*, or *Dawn of Independence), Khamosh Pani* has no illusions. The Partition, as depicted in *Khamosh Pani*, was an expression of puritan madness that is still unfolding. An effort to reverse the course was violently curbed in 1979 when the Zia dictatorship executed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto.

Timeline also deserves attention here. *Kartar Singh* was released when Pakistan was in its infancy and the state was too weak to impose hegemonic discourses on its citizenry. Also, counter-hegemonic cultural forces were strong enough to resist as well as penetrate the cultural apparatuses.[47] By the late 1960s and onwards, as the state consolidates, the Partition discourse is appropriated by the state. Hence, *LMA* (1967) not merely peddles the statist narratives on cinema screen but *Jinnah* (1998) is actually a state-led effort to construct the Partition for a global audience. Consequently, when *Khamosh Pani* (2003) endeavors to counter the statist narrative on the Partition, it is outrightly banned. Given the present atmosphere in the country, Sabiha Sumar would have been trolled and harassed for producing *Khamosh Pani* if it was released presently.

Conclusion

The specter of the Partition continues haunting Pakistan's cultural apparatuses and the ISAs. However, instead of exorcising ghost of the Partition, the state and hegemonic classes have rather skillfully deployed the Partition to imagine Pakistani community. Hence, the Partition is reproduced on a daily basis through textbooks, official rituals, scholarship, and cultural industries. However, despite Partition's ubiquity as a discourse that informs politics, identity, schoolized indoctrination, culture and history in Pakistan, it is indeed notable that the phenomenon of the Partition has not been theorized in scholarly works on the Partition in the case of Pakistan. The Partition cannot be seen as a one-off event, especially when a country has undergone bloodied Partition and a separation in less than three decades. Also, in view of Partition's pervasiveness, it is important to characterize and conceptualize this phenomenon. Without a theoretical

framework, analyzing the role of ISAs and cultural apparatuses in maintaining ruling class hegemony by shaping identity and politics will remain a shaky effort.

Therefore, this study makes an initial effort to theorize the Partition as a three-step process consisting of Context provided by colonial past, the actual Event of the Partition used by colonial authorities as an exit strategy, and an ongoing Memorialization of Partition as a political project to maintain ruling class hegemony. In the case of Pakistan, Lollywood has not been harnessed adequately by the cultural apparatuses to reproduce the Partition discourse. Since 1947, the film industry in the country has produced hardly ten films on the topic. It is even more important to note that the films produced on topics such as *Kartar Singh* and *Khamosh Pani* successfully counter the hegemonic discourses on the Partition. In these productions, the Partition has been portrayed as a collapse of society with traumatic consequences, while the Hindus and the Sikhs have not been dehumanized or stereotyped. Even *Jinnah*, a project financed, patronized and funded by the Pakistani state goes beyond the statist delineation of the Partition. However, in such productions as *LMA* or *Khak aur Khaun*,[48] one comes across rabid and crude otherification of the Hindus and the Sikhs while the Partition is constructed as a sublime beginning.

It was beyond the scope of this paper to investigate why the ISAs and cultural apparatuses have not deployed film production as a medium to reproduce the Partition. One may hazard a few guesses. For instance, one may argue the political economy of the film industry proved an obstacle. However, deploying such a lens, a future research can be conducted to further the debate on Lollywood's role in reproducing or not countering hegemonic discourses on the Partition.

Notes

1 Joe Cleary, *Literature, Palestine and the Nation State: Culture and Conflict in Ireland, Israel and Palestine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

2 *Ibid*., 2.

3 In the chronological order, these films include:
Kartar Singh. Director: Saifuddin Saif. G. A Films. 1959
Tauba. Director: S. A. Hafiz. N.A. 1964.
Lakhon Main Aik. Director: Raza Mir. United Workers. 1967
Behan Bhai. Director: Hasan Tariq. Bari Studios.1968
Pehli Nazar. Director: Aslam Dar. Shah Noor Studios. 1977
Khak aur Khaun. Director: Masoud Pervaiz. NAFDEC. 1978
Jinnah. Director: Jamil Dehlavi. The Quaid Project Limited (UK). 1998 *Jannat ki Talash*. Director: Hassan Askari. *N.A*. 1999
Khamosh Pani. Director: Subiha Sumar. Peter Hermann. 2003.

4 The "cultural apparatus", a construct first conceptualized by Bertolt Brecht, implies the "very process and means by which a work of art is brought to the public in this era of speculators, promoters, and middlemen". Brecht claimed that a commodity-oriented society did not allow its cultural apparatus to be appropriated for a radical function. Instead, the cultural apparatus merchandises the art thereby distorts and nullifies it for its own ends. See: Eleanor Hakim, "St. Brecht and the Theatrical Stock Exchange," *Monthly Review*, July-August, 2013, https://monthlyreview.org/2013/07/01/st-brecht-and-the-theatrical-stock-exchange/ (accessed September, 2021).
5 Isabela Fairclough and Norman Fairclough, *Political Discourse Analysis: A Method for Advanced Students* (London, New York: Routledge, 2012), 81.
6 Barbara Johnstone, *Discourse Analysis*, 3rd ed. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Blackwell, 2018), 2.
7 Johnstone, op.cit.
8 Jan Blommaert, *Discourse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 2.
9 Johnstone, op. cit, 3.
10 Ahmed Ijaz Malik, *US Foreign Policy and the Gulf Wars: Decision-Making and International Relations* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 10.
11 Benno Herzog, "Marx's Critique of Ideology for Discourse Analysis: from Analysis of Ideologies to Social Critique," *Critical Discourse Studies* 15, no. 4 (2018): 402–13.
12 Herzog, op. cit., 402.
13 Malik, op. cit., 8.
14 Herzog, op. cit., 403.
15 Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Conception of the Orient*, 1st ed. (New Delhi: Penguin, 2001; 1978), 94.
16 Two notable exceptions are:

(a) Ishtiaq Ahmed, "The Lahore Film Industry: A Historical Sketch," in *Travels of Bollywood* Cinema, ed. A. Gera Roy and C. B. Huat (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012).

(b) Salma Malik and Gita Vishwanath, "Revisiting 1947 Through Popular Cinema: A Comparative Study of India and Pakistan," *Economic and Political Weekly* XLIV, no. 36 (2009): 61–69.

While the former explores the impact of Partition on Lollywood, the latter, as the title suggests, is a comparative analysis, not really a case study devoted to the topic under scan in present paper.

17 While Ethiopia and Sudan underwent partitions recently, Scotland to Catalonia held referendums to assert their independence. One may also point out Jammu Kashmir or Kurdistan besides host of other such examples. Since space does not allow hence the theory on Partition covering global partitions and separations can only be teased out here. This author aims to explore the topic in a future endeavor.
18 Yasmin Khan, *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), xxi.
19 For instance, Cleary, op.cit., or Sita Tewari Jassal and Eyal Ben-Ari, "The Partition Motif: Concepts, Comparisons, Considerations," in *The Partition Motif in Contemporary Conflicts*, ed. S. T. Jassal and E. Ben-Ari (Sage: London, 2007), 19–55.
20 Stanley Waterman, "Partition and Modern Nation," in *Community, Conflict, Partition and Nationalism*, ed. C. H. Williams and E. Kofman (London: Routledge, 1989), 117–32, 117.
21 Jassal and Ben-Ari, op. cit.
22 Radha Kumar, "Settling Partition Hostilities: Lessons Learnt, the Options Ahead," in *Divided Countries, Separated Cities: The Modern Legacy of* Partition, ed. D. G. Glasson and R. Ivekovic (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), 5–7.

23 Cleary, op. cit.
24 Ranabir Samaddar, "The Last Hurrah That Continues," in *Divided Countries, Separated Cities: The Modern Legacy of* Partition, ed. D. Ghiskaine G. and R. Ivekovic (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003).
25 Khan, op. cit., xxviii.
26 *Ibid*., xxviii-xxix.
27 Cleary, op. cit., 4.
28 Denis McQuail, *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction* (Sage: London, 1994), 327.
29 Chris Newbold, "The Media Effects Tradition," in *Approaches to Media: A Reader*, ed. O. Boyd-Barrett and C. Newbold (London: Hodder, 2007), 118–19.
30 Joseph T. Klapper, "The Effects of Mass Communication," in *Approaches to Media: A Reader*, ed. O. Boyd-Barrett and C. Newbold (London: Hodder, 2007).
31 Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001), 96.
32 Most Pakistani films have been produced either in Urdu, the national language, or Punjabi, spoken in the largest province of Punjab. However, films have also been produced in Pashto, Balochi and Sindhi languages.
33 Sudhir was a Muslim actor of Pushton stock. However, like many other top film heroes of the time, such as Santosh Kumar, he adopted a Hindu film-name.
34 Zia Sarhadi rose to prominence for scripting such Bollywood classics as *Footpath* (starring Dilip Kumar) and *Hum Log*. Also, one of the rare leftists in Lollywood, Sarhadi was imprisoned and tortured during the Zia dictatorship and was forced to go in exile. However, as a screenwriter, his authorship of *LMA*'s script has always perplexed his fans and critics alike. One reason could be, if I may hazard a guess, was the charged-up post-1965 War atmosphere when the likes of Ustad Daman, a Gandhist and INC member, turned "patriotic".
35 Mushtaq Gazdar, *Pakistan Cinema 1947–1997* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 184–92.
36 *Dawn*, "Social History is Told Through Films," *Daily Dawn*, June, 2011, https://www.dawn.com/news/640484/social-history-is-told-through-film (accessed September, 2021).
37 Farooq Sulehria, "Jihad on Screen," in *From Terrorism to Television: Dynamics of Media, State, and Society*, ed. Q. Abbas and F. Sulehria (London: Routledge, 2021): 39–60.
38 Notably, even *Manto* (Director: Sarmad Khosat, 2015) a biopic exploring the life of Sadaat Hasan Manto, considered most important Urdu-language fiction writer on Partition and otherwise, avoids the event of Partition. *Manto* delineates Sadaat Hasan Manto's life in the post-Partition Pakistan.
39 Masood Ashraf Raja, *Constructing Pakistan. Foundational Texts and the Rise of Muslim National Identity 1857–1947* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), xii.
40 Muhammad Munawwar, *Dimensions of Pakistan Movement* (Lahore: WAJIDALIS, 1993), 29–30.
41 Althusser, op. cit., 86.
42 Ahmed, 2012, op.cit.
43 I have borrowed the term "collapse of society" from Pakistani-Norwegian film-maker Toni Usman. He has produced films on Partition in 1947 and has used this term in his productions.
44 In India, Pakistani Administered Jammu & Kashmir is termed as "Pakistani Occupied Jammu & Kashmir" (POJK) while in Pakistan, the Indian administered part of Jammu & Kashmir is called "Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir" but the latter region in Pakistan

is called "Azad Jammu & Kashmir". The nationalists in Jammu & Kashmir who argue for the "third option" i.e. independence for the disputed state of Jammu & Kashmir consider both parts as "Occupied". Being a state-subject of Jammu & Kashmir, this author is in agreement with Third Optionists.

45 Akbar S. Ahmed, "'Leghari and the Making of 'JINNAH'," *The Express Tribune*, November 10, 2015, https://tribune.com.pk/story/988833/leghari-and-the-making-of-jinnah (accessed September, 2021).

46 *ibid.*

47 Sadia Toor, *The State of Islam: Culture and Cold War Politics in Pakistan* (New York: Pluto, 2011).

48 *Khak aur Khaun* may also constitute an interesting case study. However, this production based on Nasim Hijaz's novel has received considerable attention in Pakistan. Hence, excluded for now.

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Reimagining and reproducing the partitions (of 1947 and 1971) in textbooks in Pakistan: a comparative analysis of the Zia and Musharraf regimes

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts at analyzing the process of reimagining and reproducing the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 and Pakistan in 1971 in the textbooks at school level during the dictatorial regimes of Zia and Musharraf. What has appealed me to draw temporal, spatial, and thematic limitations for this research? To begin with, the dictatorial regimes, are believed to, have deeply relied on manipulating the Textbook Boards to further their agendas. Moreover, both the dictators are deemed to be opposing ideologues – e.g., Zia – a fanatic ruler – radicalized the textbooks while Musharraf – a champion of "Enlightened Moderation" – tried to deradicalize the curriculum. Additionally, partitions present two different scenarios for a fascinating comparison – e.g., in 1947, Pakistan was an emergent state while in 1971, a parent state. The content analysis of the textbooks reveals that both the regimes adopted Hegel's "philosophical" approach of treating history – selecting the personalities, events, or periods of their choice while excluding or discarding the other – to reinforce the national narrative. It further suggests that the state-sponsored curriculum fosters religious nationalism, rather than secular nationalism, which, subsequently, nurtures majoritarian nationalism and bolsters the process of othering the minority groups in the country.

Introduction

The partition, apart from dividing the territories and the people, influences the post-partition process of documenting stories, recording histories, and building narratives. For example, the parent state, from which a new state is emerged, documents its story based on sorrow and loss. The state that emerges out as a result of the partition celebrates it as independence and liberation, and pens down its tale as a triumph and victory. Opposing accounts and competing narratives are, thus, woven to design curriculum and produce textbooks for the strata who attends public schools. Thus, textbooks are important and imperative tool of socialization and narrative building, and are, therefore, used to indoctrinate the elements of national narrative in the minds of young

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students to achieve the objective of collective national memory.[1] This, as is believed, protects the national interest mainly through national history and national human resource.[2]

The partition of the Indian subcontinent in August 1947 resulted in the creation of two nation-states – India and Pakistan. It was no less than a violent, vicious, and bloody revolution. However, in a short span of twenty-four years, Pakistan had to experience another brutal partition resulting in the secession of the Eastern Wing and emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state in December 1971. In the Partition of 1947, Pakistan emerged as an independent state and emphasized on recording, producing, and presenting its story as glory and triumph in the textbooks of educational institutions and other modes of reproduction of knowledge. While India, the parent state, mourned the tragedy and focused on recording, producing, and presenting it as a loss and pain. Thus, both the states tried to tell rival tales of the Partition.[3] While in the Partition of 1971, Pakistan (the parent state) and Bangladesh (the emergent state) produced and presented opposing stories. The former tried to present its account as loss and tragedy while the latter attempted to document it as triumph and magnificence.[4]

Given this background, the current paper focuses on asking: "how have the partitions (of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 and Pakistan in 1971) been documented, reimagined, and reproduced in the textbooks of Social Studies and Pakistan Studies during the dictatorial regimes of General Zia-Ul-Haq and General Pervez Musharraf?"

To answer this research question, this paper makes use of the textbooks of Social Studies from Grade-IV to Grade-VIII and Pakistan Studies from Grade-IX to Grade-X compiled by the Punjab Textbook Board during the Zia and Musharraf regimes. This research study differs from the earlier studies in various aspects. To begin with, two dictatorial regimes are chosen, as a temporal limitation, because the dictators, are believed to, have deeply relied on manipulating the Textbook Boards to further their agendas even though they have to resort to religion to reimagine and reproduce the partitions to build anti–Indian and anti-Bengali narratives. Secondly, comparing two opposing ideologues – where Zia is deemed as a zealot and fanatic ruler who radicalized textbooks while Musharraf is considered to be the champion of "Enlightened Moderation" who attempted to deradicalize the curriculum – makes it an interesting case. Thirdly, two partitions present two different scenarios for a fascinating comparison where Pakistan is an emergent state in one case while a parent state in the other. Fourthly, the textbooks of Social Studies and Pakistan Studies are selected because these are taught as compulsory subjects to almost all classes (i.e. from Grade-IV to Grade-X) at schools and play prime role in transforming syllabi imperatives into the foundational stories identified by the authorities as core knowledge for classroom transmission, and consequently, in building narratives and shaping opinions of the

young students. Lastly, by making use of theoretical design – consisting of textbooks, nationalism, and Hegelian approach of treating history and constructing past – for content and text anlaysis of the selected textbooks, this research paper would enrich the existing theoretical conception of the subject matter.

The research study, apart from abstract and introduction, is divided into five parts. After reviewing the existing literature on the topic in the first section, themes and concepts that constitute theoretical design are elaborated in the second part. The third unit traces the history of curriculum, textbooks, and Textbook Boards in Punjab. The fourth section attempts at reimagining and reproducing the partitions in the textbooks by applying theoretical design on the one hand and quoting excerpts from the textbooks on the other hand. The final part concludes the debates and sums up the analyses.

Review of literature

Recently, a number of analysts[5] have made valuable attempts in making analysis of the contents and texts of history textbooks to bring forth the implicit and explicit objectives and meanings of the policy makers, textbook compilers, and educational bureaucracies. As textbooks are the primary source of knowledge for millions of students, thus, they must be prepared with utmost care and thoughtful consideration so they can play a vital role in preparing students for developing critical thinking and acquiring rational knowledge.[6] That is why the experts of the relevant subjects are given the task of compiling and producing textbooks, otherwise, they receive severe criticism from the analysts. Unfortunately, in Pakistan, the analysts and the critics have paid less attention to the textbooks.

The initiative of analyzing the history textbooks was taken by Khursheed Kamal Aziz, an eminent Pakistani historian. However, instead of making analysis of the contents and texts, Aziz chiefly emphasized on pointing out the distortions of the facts and events and reprimanded the governments and the compilers of the textbooks for not only twisting but also erasing the important historical events from the syllabi.[7] Unlike Aziz, Mubarak Ali confined his analysis of the textbooks to the ideological contents only. Ali concluded by arguing that the "defective textbooks create a defective mindset." It means indoctrination of ideology restricts people from gaining knowledge to understand the fast changing world.[8] Advancing this argument, Ayesha Jalal maintained that Zia's regime Islamized education through the "National Education Policy of 1979," impacted the process of history-writing and teaching in the country.[9] In this way, the facts, events, and periods glorifying the Muslim rule and rulers, undermining the non-Muslim rule and rulers, were incorporated in the textbooks while others undermining the Muslim rule and rulers, and glorifying the non-Muslim rule and rulers, were discarded.

As Aziz is credited for initiating the analysis of the textbooks in the country, Faraz Anjum is attributed for examining the textbooks from the perspective of Pakistani nationalist and defense discourse. Anjum's research concluded that the national version of the history regarding the secession of East Pakistan, in the textbooks, is "distorted, biased and incomplete in which the military has been unfairly glorified".[10] Extending this criticism on the nationalist version of the history, it is opined that the nationalist school deliberately made selective construction, and misinterpreted and even omitted certain periods and events from the textbooks believing to be "detrimental to the process of nation-building in Pakistan".[11] Thus, the states produce, organize, and distribute the social knowledge "to construct national collective memory".[12] This trend is even more prominent in the nascent states, which not only discard earlier belongings but also construct and determine "enemies" across and within national borders.[13]

Challenging this critique of the nationalist version of the historical knowledge, some scholars[14] hold that state-patronized curriculum gives birth to secular nationalism, rather than majoritarian nationalism, which, in turn, contributes in nation building and state formation. For example, Chughtai asserts that "the state-patronised curriculum fosters secular nationalism, rather than religious nationalism, which facilitates the process of nation building".[15] Advancing their argument and supporting the nationalist version of the history in textbooks, Sandhu maintains that national history "produces a generation who represents specific land, culture, religion, political ideology, art, and social ethics." Sandhu further stresses that there is hardly a country or nation which does not teach and prepare its generations by indoctrinating its own national interpretation of the historical events.[16]

The present research, instead of directly addressing the two opposing perspectives, limits itself to make an astounding comparison of: the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 and Pakistan in 1971; dictatorial regimes of Zia and Musharraf; and the textbooks of Social Studies and Pakistan Studies. Thus, this study is an attempt to fill the research gaps that have been left by others.

Theoretical design

The thematic analysis that follows will make use of the following concepts – textbooks, nationalism, and Hegelian approach of treating history and constructing the past. These concepts constitute the theoretical design. There is a strong correlation among these concepts and themes – e.g., preparation and compilation of textbooks and construction and propagation of nationalism through the textbooks are patronized by the governments, which generally adopt Hegelian approach of "philosophical" history to construct the past to promote their own agendas.

Textbooks

Textbook, on a particular subject, is considered a standard work and, is planned and prepared for classroom use with "appropriate vocabulary, illustrations, student exercises and teacher aids." Its objective is to render "an orderly introduction to a discipline or subject area," which offers the student with an opportunity to learn independently.[17] Thus, the textbooks "occupy a central role in translating curriculum imperatives into the foundational stories identified by the authorities as core knowledge for class room transmission".[18] Though the textbooks are deemed an integral part of an education system, however, it is hard to gauge the percentage of their impact on the young students since it rests with a complex and varied set of factors ranging from childhood experiences, family, teachers, friends, peer pressures, and exposure to discourses other than textbooks.[19] Nonetheless, it is not difficult to comprehend the objectives of the compilers of the textbooks, the policy designers, and the education administrators.[20] The compilers, as are directed, make sure that the wrangling of the ideological orientations of that society, for which the textbooks are compiled, must reflect in the books. This assertion particularly holds water regarding the history textbooks which generally play the dual role.[21] First, that the textbooks indoctrinate the officially recognized narratives to the posterity as "learning one's history is part of the process by which citizens learn to position their country and the values that their country espouses within the wider international society".[22] It is, thus, deemed to be producing responsible citizens who actively contribute in constructing collective memory and developing nationalism.[23] Second, that "one of the aims of the school subject of history is to inculcate in pupils patriotism and pride in the nation state".[24] Though the latter role of the textbooks is an extension of the first yet it "is more complex and, thus, has been repeatedly contested as it is fraught with dangers"[25] since, mostly, it is based on hate and othering,[26] and in Pakistan, it is achieved "by relying heavily on the identity forming subjects such as history (a sense of time), civics (a sense of power), and geography (a sense of space), together known as Social Studies".[27]

Nationalism

Nationalism is the other concept which is used as a component of theoretical design for this research paper. Different groups – ethnic, religious, regional, and social – define it differently at different times and places. Broadly speaking, nationalism comprises of three basic elements[28]: first, who are we and what divides or separates "us" from "them" – geography, creed, religion, caste, race, language, or something else?; second, where do we belong – what is our historic homeland?; and third, how far back in time do we go – where should we stop tracing our lineage? Third element concerning documenting history

and building narrative – creating collective national memory – forms the basis of the author's research on textbooks, aimed at explaining how states generate, endure, and propagate positive images of their own nations and negative ones of others.

Thus, nationalism, in itself, is considered a contested ideology,[29] which often makes the selection of the content for national history textbooks to produce collective national memory disputed. So, it becomes quite difficult to choose what to include, what to exclude, what to remember, what to forget, what is relevant, and what is irrelevant.[30] Therefore, it generates controversy.[31] For example, the national remembering of a parent state and an emergent state contradicts – pride and triumph for the latter are shame and defeat for the former, and heroes for the latter are villains for the former.[32] That is why the textbooks of history embody hybrid texts which echo a variety of conflicting forces or ideas or voices within a society.[33] Therefore, it is largely acknowledged that "in their production and usage, school history textbooks appear as cultural artefacts that typically reveal the ideological, social, historical and geopolitical forces that influence their construction".[34] These textbooks, while carrying official state narratives for nation building and state formation, may cause conflict and engender tension across states – e.g., China, Japan, and South Korea are often at conflict with one another.[35] These national narratives may also cause tensions within the states – e.g., there is a disagreement on: the accountability of slavery in the United States[36]; national heroes or villains in various states[37]; and portraying of working classes, women, and ethnic minorities.[38] Moreover, they, mainly due to their divisive tendencies, may cause violence toward otherised groups.[39]

Hegelian approach and constructing the past

Hegelian approach of treating history and constructing the past makes last component of the theoretical design. Hegel pens down that a historian's job is to pinpoint and classify the rudimentary aspects or features of an event and record them for future generations – for which, he points out three distinct approaches – original, reflective, and philosophical – of treating history.[40] In the case of "original" history, the spirit of the historian is a product of the time. He is a chronicler of the events. He pursues to record and present the events with negligible chances of distortion, misrepresentation, and adulteration. In the case of "reflective" history, the spirit of the historian may or may not be the product of the time. Instead of dealing with the events as a chronicler, he employs didactic, critical, and fragmentary methodologies to preserve and present the events. Thus, he may or may not distort, misrepresent, and alter the facts. In the case of "philosophical" history, the historian adopts the teleological approach to understand the rationale of history. He thoughtfully considers the reason for the examination of historical events. The last

approach of treating history offers an opportunity to the historian to make a selection of characters, events, periods, and regions of choice while ignoring or discarding the others just to create and reinforce the national narrative[41]

Apart from this, historian interprets historical facts and events according to his own choice,[42] which serve political purposes – mainly an ideology. That is why it is claimed "whenever history is written under the influence of an ideology, its objectivity is sacrificed"[43] and "nationalist historians have – often been – servants of ideologists,"[44] and "the past is written in the light of the present requirements of the authoritarian governments".[45] In this way, biased and distorted history is created.[46]

Curriculum, textbooks, and textbook boards in Pakistan: a brief overview

The process of indoctrinating the people of the Indian subcontinent through the textbooks is not new. This project was launched by the British by forming the Punjab Textbook Committee in 1877 (renaming as Advisory Board for Books in 1937). It was followed by the establishment of the Punjab Textbook Board (PTB), which was privatized in 1940s. The post-colonial governments reformed the Textbook Board in 1950s, nationalized in 1960s, and Islamized in 1970s.[47] The first serious attempt to frame the country's education policy on a larger scale was made by General Ayub Khan who established the Commission on National Education in 1959, whose report – known as Sharif Commission Report – proved *magna carta* of Pakistani education. As suggested in the report, the West Pakistan Textbook Board was established in July 1962 under West Pakistan Textbook Ordinance XLI of 1962.[48] It "envisioned massive and far-reaching changes," for education system and "aimed to reconstruct [national consciousness] along the lines of modernity, development and Pakistani nationalism".[49] Through its policy objectives, the commission proposed that "the moral and spiritual values of Islam combined with the freedom, integrity and strength of Pakistan should be the ideology which inspires our educational system,"[50] and suggested to "strive to create a sense of unity and of nationhood among the people of Pakistan".[51] As a result of new educational policy, the subjects of history and geography were eliminated and a new subject of Social Studies – medley of history, geography, and civics – was introduced.[52]

After the secession of East Pakistan in 1971, the "Punjab Textbook Board" replaced the "West Pakistan Textbook Board." The new government led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto introduced Pakistan Studies as a new compulsory subject – in fact, Social Studies was replaced with Pakistan Studies for Grade-IX and Grade-X – as a national identity forming arsenal.[53] Though the ideological indoctrination through the textbooks was introduced by General Ayub Khan, however, it was revolutionized by General Zia-Ul-Haq – another military dictator – who attempted to Islamize the education through the "National

Education Policy of 1979." He successfully carried it out with the aid of the Jamat-i-Islami (JI), a religio-political party, which dominated the education bureaucracy (administration). Thus, "in Pakistan, nationalism construction . . . is articulated by right wing religious parties, especially Jamat-i-Islami".[54] Apart from JI, Ismail Faruqui's "Islamisation of Knowledge" is considered as a major factor during the 1970s and 1980s as one of the backdrops of Zia's discretionary trajectories. Faruqui's works influenced several influential brains and advisers of the time including Akbar S. Ahmed, Pareshan Khattak, Fateh Muhammad Malik, Nabi Bakhsh Baloch, Waheed-Uz-Zaman, Muhammad Aslam, Riaz Ahmed, Yusuf Abbas, Mumtaz Mufti, and Ashfaque Ahmed who did feel the need to "reorient" Pakistani focus in texts and new curriculum. Thus, a generation of policy makers were behind the Ziaist shift.

This process of ideological indoctrination, which was initiated and accelerated by his predecessors (General Ayub and General Zia), was vainly attempted at reversing by General Pervez Musharraf – another military dictator – by introducing two education policies i.e., 2002 and 2006, that were aimed at reforming the education and deradicalizing the curriculum. Thus, his attempts to champion the "Enlightened Moderation" proved abortive, at least, in deradicalizing the curriculum. Analysts, without overlooking other important causes, suggest that his attempts failed mainly due to JI's influence within the bureaucracy.[55] Thus, the indoctrination of religious ideology, the construction of nationalistic identities, and the otherising of minority groups remained cardinal components of the textbooks.[56]

In the aftermath of the Sharif Commission Report, Textbook Boards were tasked to supervise the planning, compilation, and production of the textbooks for Grade-I to Grade-XII, making sure that the policies of the government were adequately echoed in the textbooks. The boards task a team of authors to compile and produce the textbooks, which are proofread, modified, and improved by another team of experts, and finally, edited by another expert. Afterward, the National Review Committee in the Federal Ministry of Education reviews and approves its "ideological" content. Then, the Provincial Government publishes it and declares it as the "sole textbook." For this research study, textbooks of Social Studies and Pakistan Studies – which are taught in public schools – are selected.

Reimagining and reproducing the partitions in the textbooks

This section attempts at reimagining and reproducing the partitions in the textbooks by applying theoretical design on the one hand and quoting excerpts from the textbooks on the other hand. The first part highlights how and why some dates are remembered while other are either forgotten or ignored. While the second unit traces the journey from the "Two-Nation Theory" to "Ideology of Pakistan," and finally, "Ideology of Islam." Then, the third part attempts at

constructing the past through Hegel's "philosophical" approach of treating history. The final unit tries to create national identity through binary conflicts i.e. "self" and "other."

"Big" dates: remembering, silencing, and forgetting

As it has been discussed earlier on, the state directs the nationalist historians to record and produce history to carry out its ideology and to reinforce its national narrative. The historian, making use of "philosophical" approach, interprets and twists the historical facts and events according to his own choice mainly to serve a political purpose or agenda. In this way, impartiality and objectivity is forfeited because the historical events and their interpretations are maneuvered for a particular objective.[57] Giving more attention and space to some historical events in the textbooks while less to others is a kind of manipulation, which serves a particular agenda mainly led by the state. Pakistani state does not lag behind in this sphere and directs the textbook compilers to give more attention and space to the events of the Partition of 1947 than those of 1971.[58] The former is discussed and debated more frequently than those of the latter. For example, the textbook of Social Studies for Grade-VII delineates the whole story of the creation of Bangladesh in one line: "due to some internal as well as external factors, East Pakistan was separated from West Pakistan and became an independent country i.e., Bangladesh, in 1971"[59] and the textbook of Pakistan Studies for Grade-IX and Grade-X outlines the whole episode in two-three sentences: "After the elections of 1970, the country was plunged into crisis and East Pakistan separated. This was a national tragedy . . . .in 1971, when the East Pakistani government was in political turmoil, India used the opportunity and attacked us as, a result of which, East Pakistan broke away and became a separate country".[60]

Even the terms in which the dates are mentioned are revealing – e.g., "liberation" is the dominant theme of narratives in 1947 while "conspiracy" is the dominant theme of narratives in 1971. The events of the Partition of 1947 are discussed in detail since they carry the national narrative of liberation of the emergent state – Pakistan – from the parent state – India. While the events of the Partition of 1971 are mentioned in grimmer terms since they do not affirm, instead defy, the national narrative of the Two-Nation Theory. That is why instead of discussing the structural causes of Bengali disaffection with the Pakistani state, the emphasis is on the conspiracy hatched by the anti-Pakistan forces led by India. Therefore, the events of civil war and interference of Indian political government and penetration of Indian forces, as vital factors of the dismemberment of Eastern Wing, find more space in the textbooks. As one Pakistan Studies textbook notes:

> After the 1965 war, India, with the help of Hindus living in East Pakistan, incited Bengalis against the people of West Pakistan and, finally, in December 1971, itself invaded East Pakistan. As a result of this conspiracy, East Pakistan seceded from West Pakistan in December 1971.[61]

So, instead of educating the students (and other readers) about political, economic, and social and cultural disparities among East and West Pakistan, Indian state and Awami League led Bengali politicians are made responsible for the creation of Bangladesh. This claim is substantiated by the following excerpt that is taken from a Social Studies textbook for Grade-V:

> In 1970, general elections were held in Pakistan. As a result, the Awami League won a landslide victory in East Pakistan, while the Pakistan People's Party emerged as the largest party in West Pakistan. The Awami League was not allowed to form a government despite its majority, which led to a political crisis in the country. Taking advantage of this situation, India started inciting the leaders and people of East Pakistan to revolt against West Pakistan. Thus, the separatist movement started in East Pakistan and India deployed its troops. The Pakistani army fought valiantly but, with the intervention of India, the vast territory of East Pakistan was cut off from West Pakistan. After the ceasefire, East Pakistan, which is now called Bangladesh, declared secession.[62]

A Pakistan Studies textbook for Grade-X mentions the role of the Hindus in the creation of Bangladesh as: "In East Pakistan, trade and government jobs were dominated by Hindus in large numbers and they were stirring up a sense of separatism among the people under a special scheme".[63]

Instead of emphasizing on long term causes of Bengali disaffection with the West Pakistanis, outbreak of the war, the violence, and the crisis are points in focus. Thus, the textbooks, overlooking historical records, carry out the national narratives which instead call attention to the regional or global powers who have conspired to create Bangladesh.

Nationalistic narratives: from the "Two nation theory" to "Ideology of Pakistan"

As it is discussed above, the third element of nationalism concerning documenting history and building narrative – i.e. where should we stop tracing our lineage? – forms the basis of this research on textbooks, which aims at explaining how states generate, endure, and propagate positive images of their nations and negative ones of others.[64] For example, without demeaning the Hindus, the national narrative of Pakistani Muslims cannot be built. This is evident from the following excerpt that is taken from a Social Studies textbook:

> The Muslims made valuable contributions to the architecture of the subcontinent. Prior to the advent of the Muslims, the people of the subcontinent resided in narrow, congested, and dark houses. The architecture of the Hindus exhibited narrowness,

> labyrinthine complications, layer upon layer of complexity and conical shaped structures. The architectural refinement of the Muslims exhibited openness, vast spaces and external glory. They built open, airy and grand structures.[65]

This is also affirmed by the following quote, which tries to compare a Muslim mosque and a Hindu temple in an interesting way. The quote reads as "The dark, narrow and enclosed Hindu temple symbolises darkness, narrowness and dirt of the Hindus while open, well-lit and clean Muslim mosque indicates openness, illumination and cleanliness of the Muslims".[66]

Ayub Khan replaced the subject of "History" with "Social Studies," and later on Bhutto substituted it with "Pakistan Studies" in higher classes i.e. Grade-IX and Grade-X. In the same vein, "Two Nation Theory" which was promoted to legitimize the establishment of Pakistani state was replaced with the "Ideology of Pakistan" during Ayub era.[67] This was shyly defined as "Islam," which marked anti–India bias.[68] However, it has now become an important part of every Social Studies and Pakistan Studies textbook. For example, a textbook of Pakistan Studies for Grade-X notes:

> The ideology of Pakistan and the Islamic ideology of life are generally considered to be synonymous. Undoubtedly, the Islamic ideology is the basis of the ideology of Pakistan. It can be said that the ideology of Pakistan refers to the awareness of the Muslims in the historical context of the South Asian subcontinent that they are a separate nation from the Hindus based on the Islamic ideology.[69]

Interestingly, the term "Ideology of Pakistan" had no historical basis in the Pakistan Movement and it was never used by Quaid-i-Azam. It was coined and labeled as Islam in 1962.[70] Mohammad Munir, Ex-Chief Justice of Pakistan, affirms it as:

> . . . the Ideology of Pakistan was not known to anybody until in 1962 a solitary member of the *Jamaat-i-Islami* used these words for the first time when the Political Parties Bill was being discussed. On this, Chaudhry Fazal Elahi, who has recently retired as President of Pakistan, rose from his seat and objected that the 'Ideology of Pakistan' shall have to be defined. The member who had proposed the original amendment replied that the 'Ideology of Pakistan was Islam' . . ..[71]

This was further carried out by Bhutto, who introduced educational reforms encompassing arsenal for Islamization of education – e.g., Ideology of Pakistan i.e. Islamic Ideology, was encapsulated in Pakistan Studies textbooks.[72] Thus the 1960s and 1970s marked as the decades of transformation of narratives.[73] However, it is the year 1979, when Zia launched his own educational policy (the National Education Policy), which is marked as a critical juncture because he tried to harmonize education "with the concepts of Islam and Ideology of Pakistan" and compatible "with the Pakistan Movement".[74] The following passage validates it as:

> The establishment of an independent state in the name of Pakistan in the subcontinent is the most important event of the twentieth century. There was a strong ideology at the root of this incident . . . The ideology of Pakistan is based on the Islamic ideology. Beliefs, worship, rule of law, brotherhood, equality and justice are elements of Pakistan's ideology.[75]

Zia thought that the previous regimes had failed to implement the "Islamic Ideology." Thus, they could not substantially contribute in the process of nation building in Pakistan. Therefore, he outlined his objectives in his "National Education Policy and Implementation Programme" as:

> To foster in the hearts and minds of the people of Pakistan in general and the students in particular a deep and abiding loyalty to Islam and Pakistan and a living consciousness of their spiritual and ideological identity thereby strengthening unity of the outlook of the people of Pakistan on the basis of justice and fair play.[76]

Contrary to Zia, Musharraf, the champion of the "Enlightened Moderation," was considered as liberal and secular. He made attempts in 2002 and 2006 to deradicalize the textbooks. However, his attempts met with failure since the education bureaucracy, mainly dominated by JI, refused to cooperate with him.[77] Thus, "Ideology of Pakistan" in terms of Islam in practice remained as a central part of the textbooks – it is a continuation of the Zia era's education policy.[78] This is confirmed by the quote, from a Social Studies textbook, which reads a "The ideology of Pakistan and the Islamic ideology are generally considered to be synonymous. Undoubtedly, Islamic ideology is the basis of the ideology of Pakistan".[79]

Construction of the past through "Philosophical" approach of treating history

In the "philosophical" way of treating history, teleological methodology to comprehend the rationale of history offers an opportunity to select the personalities, events, periods, or regions of choice while exclude or discard the other to create and reinforce the national narrative. By adopting this approach, both India and Pakistan (after the Partition of 1947) recorded and produced their respective histories to create their national identities and to advance their official narratives on historical events for the purpose of state formation and nation building. To reinforce this project, they have been picking up selective historical facts, personalities, events, and periods for the textbooks.[80]

Content analysis of the Social Studies textbooks (Grade-IV to Grade-VIII) and Pakistan Studies textbooks (Grade-IX and Grade-X) that were prepared by Punjab Textbook Board during the Zia and Musharraf regimes suggests that the national history of Pakistan leaps from one historical period to another while glossing over interceding periods. For example, the history begins from the Indus Valley Civilization – which is given more space – and then mentions the arrival and decline of the Indo-Aryans – which is given

lesser space – and, then, it jumps to the invasion of Muhammad Bin Qasim (b. 695 – d. 715) – who is portrayed as the champion of Islam in the subcontinent, and the brave and benevolent ruler.[81] In this vein, Zia acclaim his invasion by celebrating Yum-ul-Babul-e-Islam (the day of advent of Islam). Moreover, the textbooks of the 1980s depict him as the first Pakistani citizen.[82] Contrary, Hinduism and the Hindus are mentioned slightly. In addition, they are criticized for their rigid caste system and their mistreatment of the lower castes and women.[83] For example, a Social Studies textbook records that "Hinduism had established a rigid and unjust caste system. Islam's principles of tolerance and equality greatly influenced the Hindus especially those who were being oppressed through the caste system".[84] Thus, Hinduism is maligned and the Hindus are portrayed as a bad creature mainly to differentiate Hinduism and Islam, and the Hindus and the Muslims. The criticism of the Hindu caste system being unjust and uncivilized creature loses its significance in the face of the fact that Pakistani society firmly stands on the same grounds, that is, the *biraderi* system.

The textbooks jump from early eighth century (i.e. from the death of Muhammd Bin Qasim) to early eleventh century (i.e. the rise of Mahmud of Ghazna). Mahmud's seventeen invasions are painted as a counterattack to the raids carried out by Hindu Shahi Kings on the Islamic Kingdom of Ghazna. Besides, Al-Beruni, the court historian of Mahmud and the author of the *Kitab-ul-Hind*, is also given considerable space in the textbooks. The book is considered as an important source of historical information of that era. Referring to this book, the textbooks underline the differences between the two major communities i.e. the Muslims and the Hindus. Then the history, while overlooking around one and a half century, jumps to the era of Muhammad Ghori (b. 1160 – d. 1206). He is painted as an aspiring empire builder who was ambitious and unwavering to expand his empire toward Hindustan. From the discussion, he appears as "the founder of the Muslim Empire in the subcontinent".[85]

The next leap takes the students to Ghiyas-Ud-Din Balban (b. 1200 – d. 1287) and introduces some other Sultans of the Delhi Sultanate (1206–1526). Jalal-Ud-Din Muhammad Akbar (b. 1542 – d. 1605) is another Muslim ruler who finds considerable space in the textbooks. For example, the Pakistan Studies textbooks (for Grade-X) proclaim that his religious ideas were influenced, shaped, and guided by the Bhakti Movement, which began during the Sultanate period, and he advocated for Hindu-Muslim unity. That is why Islam was in danger during his rule. Responding to this danger, Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi (b. 1564–1624), popularly known as Mujaddad Alif Sani (the reformer of the second millennium), took the task of protecting and reviving Islam to his shoulders. He rejected Akbar's plans of bringing Islam and Hinduism together because, he believed, this would loosen the Muslim grip on the sources of imperial strength. In this context, he is portrayed as the

real exponent of the "Two Nation Theory." The books claim that "the foundation of Pakistan was laid when Sirhindi refused to bow his head before Akbar and challenged his new religion, Deen-e-Elahi".[86]

Then the textbooks jump to the second half of seventeenth century and early eighteenth century and mention details of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1658–1707) and Shah Waliullah (b. 1703 – d. 1762) of Delhi. The year of the death of Aurangzeb is termed as the beginning of the decline of Muslims in South Asia. On the other hand, Shah Waliullah is acclaimed for arousing desire among the Muslims to "win back [Islam's] moral fervour and maintain its purity." Moreover, he is hailed for inviting Ahamd Shah Abdali (b. 1726 – d. 1773) to invade India to crush the Marathas, who were relentlessly and perpetually challenging the declining Muslim Empire. Haji Shariatullah (b. 1781 – d. 1840) of Bengal and Syed Ahmad Shaheed (b. 1786 – d. 1831) of Raebareli are credited for launching puritanical Faraizi Movement in Bengal and Jihad Movement in Punjab, respectively. The textbooks credit them for purifying Islam, which had been polluted by the Hindu influence.[87]

Remarkably, the textbooks, after underscoring the incompatible differences between the Hindus and the Muslims and depicting the latter as archrivals of the former, also indicate that both together fought against the British in 1857. Instead of mentioning the reason(s) for their joint venture against the British – why did the Hindus join hands with the Muslims against the British in the "First War of Independence?," the textbooks claim that the Hindus yoked with the British to inflict oppression and suffering on the Muslims. For example, it is described that the Hindus formed the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1885 to get closer to the imperialists and to acquire concessions from them for their community. That is why the Muslim leaders founded the All India Muslim League (AIML) to safeguard the interests and to protect the rights of the Muslims of India in the hostile environment. Thus, the INC is portrayed as the party of the Hindus while the AIML is depicted as the party of the Muslims, without mentioning that a large number of Muslims had been associated with the INC.[88]

Since the inception of Pakistan, "a number of rhetorical and narrative devices have been used to construct a particular picture of the past to perpetually reiterate the dominant state ideology which has been resistant to change".[89] Thus, the "story of the two nations, Hindus and Muslims, as two eternally opposed, inimical entities incapable of ever reconciling is the most prominent feature of Pakistani official textbooks." For example,

> It appears that Pakistani public school textbooks were not written to serve the pedagogical imperatives of intellectual development and the inculcation of critical thinking. Rather, they were written to perpetually justify a divisive ideology of rupture which had to be continually reiterated in the construction of national memory.[90]

Selectivity of the characters, events, periods, or regions for the textbooks is not limited to the pre-partition history only, the biases are also reflected in the post-partition history as well. For example, the imposition of martial laws and the reigns of the military dictators receive scant attention while the wars with India are given considerable space and their details are manipulated to promote the people's confidence in the Pakistani armed forces.[91] Identically, the democratic experiments in the country are not given considerable space and significant attention in the textbooks.[92] Similarly, the secession of the Eastern Wing of the country is not mentioned in majority of the textbooks (e.g., at the lower level) and the Indo-Pak war of 1971 that caused the "Fall of Islamabad (to me, it was the Fall of Islamabad, rather than the Fall of Decca as is mentioned in the textbooks)" is interpreted as mainly a war over Kashmir. Even in the higher grades, the war of 1971 and the creation of Bangladesh did not receive enough space and attention until 2004,[93] when a special section was introduced on the subject, where the Hindus of East Pakistan, the leaders of the Awami League, and the Indian state were held responsible for the dismemberment of the Eastern Wing. This is reflected from the following quote from a Grade-X textbook:

> Sheikh Mujibur Rehman [developed] secret relations with India. The All India Radio, through its programmes, created hatred in the hearts of Bengalis against the people of West Pakistan . . . A large number of Hindu teachers were teaching in educational institutions in East Pakistan. They produced such literature which created negative thinking in the minds of Bengalis. About 10 million Hindus were living in East Pakistan. India stood at their back to protect their interests. Many Hindus acted as spies for India.[94]

Creation of national identity through binary conflicts: "Self" and "Other"

Either as "us" and "them" or "self" and "others," it is hard to deny that these and other identities are products of crisis, and they are consolidated through the process of socialization and acculturation. The Pakistani state has conceived and nurtured "them" or "other" *outside* national boundaries exemplified as Hindus, Sikhs, Jews, Christians, and so on. These others *within* the boundaries are regional, religious, and ethnic minorities considered a threat to national unity, let alone national security. This paper argues and highlights the importance of textbooks of Social Studies from Grade-IV to Grade-VIII and Pakistan Studies of Grade-IX and Grade-X in socialization and acculturation of identities surrounding self/others with a particular focus on Hindu and Bengali *others*. Thus, only two of the enemies are discoursed here. In the former case, Pakistan (a Muslim majority state) emerged out of India (a Hindu majority state) as a result of Partition of 1947. While in the latter case, East Pakistan seceded from West Pakistan and culminated as Bangladesh, an independent state, as a result of Partition of 1971.

The Hindu "Other"

Teaching Hindus and Muslims as others in Pakistan and India, respectively, aims at keeping the past alive and the historical evolution of the Partition of 1947 in the minds and souls of the common people in the two nations.[95] Textbooks of Social Studies and Pakistan Studies advance this objective highlighting the idea of two-nations through the lens of two-civilization who were poles apart from each other and were impossible to survive on one land and under one rule.[96] It is important to note that these books focus only on descriptive or sociological differences and completely ignore the analytical or philosophical reasoning of developing such a distinction.

A hostile enemy with an inferior culture whose social structure is based on the inhumane caste system, India is portrayed as "our most hostile neighbour" with which Pakistani nation cannot be united mainly due to maintaining its distinct national identity – though it can be united with any other nation or people living outside its boundaries. There is a strong belief (and fear) in Pakistani nation, as it is still being incorporated or indoctrinated through the textbooks, that India has never accepted its existence and wants to destroy it as it partially did in 1971. This is evident from the following excerpt:

> As the days of gaining independence from the British approached, the Hindus strongly opposed the idea of the establishment of Pakistan. Under these circumstances, the unparalleled leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah compelled the British and the Hindus to accept the demand for the establishment of Pakistan. However, the Hindus did not wholeheartedly acknowledge the existence of Pakistan [and waited to destroy it].[97]

Then, Grade-V textbooks published in 1988 in Zia's regime describe Hindu temples as dark, narrow, and enclosed compared to Muslim mosques being open, well-lit, and clean.[98] Likewise, a 2002 textbook proclaims that "the Muslims made valuable contributions to the architecture of the subcontinent. Prior to the advent of the Muslims, the people of the subcontinent resided in narrow, congested and dark houses".[99] Similarly, Hindus are criticized for their rigid castes system, as a Social Studies textbook records that "Hinduism had established a rigid and unjust caste system".[100] The criticism of the Hindu caste system being unjust and uncivilized creature loses its significance in the face of the fact that Pakistani society firmly stands on the same grounds, that is, the *biraderi* system.

Despite all this, there were various occasions (e.g., the War of Independence of 1857, the Lucknow Pact, and the Khilafat Movement) where the two communities – the Muslims and the Hindus – collaborated with each other for a peaceful co-existence. However, these instances are mentioned slightly – they are given least space in the textbooks. And even the terms in which they are mentioned presents a grimmer picture of the Hindus and makes them a suspicious creature. For example, though the Hindus and the Muslims

fought together against the British in the War of Independence of 1857, yet the textbooks try to portray the Hindus as the collaborators of the British. To add, it is also mentioned that the Hindus tried to persuade the British that the Muslims had fought against them, not the Hindus. For example, the Social Studies textbook for Grade-VIII notes that "although both the Hindus and the Muslims took part in the war of Independence of 1857, however, the Hindus used their cunning to convince the British that only the Muslims revolted".[101]

This is done mainly to substantiate the idea of the "Two-Nation Theory," which rejects every chance of commonality of history, food, culture, language, music, and dress, and embraces that the two were always entirely poles apart in every way. Though the differences between them are mentioned in the textbooks, yet they are not elaborated fearing that they would end up uncovering or revealing the possible commonalities, which may challenge the idea of the "Two Nation Theory" – that makes the basis for the "Muslim Pakistan" and the "Hindu India." Thus, this relegates the knowledge of the *other* to the domain of mythology. Therefore, it can be said that both India and Pakistan mythologize the historical knowledge about each other. For example, Pakistani textbooks refer to the INC as a Hindu body overlooking its Muslim membership, and varying perspectives or narratives among its leadership over secular nationalism and communal distinctions.[102] Equally, the Indian textbooks depict the AIML as a Muslim body despite the fact that its sway was limited to the Northern parts of India.[103] The privileging of religious identity over all other sources of identity, allows the textbook writers to use the notion of "Hindu India" to create "Muslim Pakistan." This is evident from the following passage:

> The Indian National Congress was founded by Allan Octavian Hume, an Englishman, and its aim was to provide a political platform to the Indians. Many Indians joined it in the beginning. However, very soon, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had realised that it was only a representative party of the Hindus, rather than a representative body of all the nations. Therefore, he advised the Muslims to stay away from the Congress.[104]

The Bengali "Other"

The narrative that Bengalis are *others* is quite pervasive in our textbooks being promoted through the religious, parochial, provincial, and regional cleavages. Together, an analysis of the texts suggests that besides being at war with *others* outside its boundaries, the state has created *others* within its boundaries and is upfront with them.[105] Pakistan perhaps has the unique distinction of being the only country from which the majority (Bengalis) seceded in 1971 and formed a separate homeland – Bangladesh.[106]

This separation, as a result of the Partition of 1971, of the Eastern Wing is possibly the most painful and unforgettable chapter of Pakistan's history. The nation is still in the shock of this traumatic incident and has not

accepted it fully yet – though the it is fifty-year-old now. There is a strong ethical doubt among Pakistanis concerning the events of war and the Partition of 1971 because it is quite easy to justify the fight, war, and separation with the shield of religion when it is against a Hindu *other*, however, religious justifications for the fight, war, and separation do not easily invoke in support of the besieged *self* when the opponent is a fellow Muslim, a Bengali *other*. Subsequently, the account of the two people become plainly fictional because both come from a similar religious background. Bangladesh becomes a gaping hole in national memory. Thus, "the only way to speak about it is through silence".[107]

This is the objective – speaking through silence – that is precisely achieved through the textbooks. There are several ways of concealing the facts: telling a contrasting or opposing tale; speaking half-truth; and keeping silence. The account of separation of East Pakistan – creation of Bangladesh – is concealed between half-truths and full lies e.g.,

> In 1970, general elections were held in Pakistan. As a result, the Awami League won a landslide victory in East Pakistan while the Pakistan People's Party emerged as the largest party in West Pakistan. The Awami League was not allowed to form a government despite its majority, which led to a political crisis in the country. Taking advantage of this situation, India started inciting the leaders and people of East Pakistan to revolt against West Pakistan. Thus, the separatist movement started in East Pakistan and India deployed its troops. The Pakistani army fought valiantly but, with the intervention of India, the vast territory of East Pakistan was cut off from West Pakistan. After the ceasefire, East Pakistan, which is now called Bangladesh, declared secession.[108]

Thus, the textbooks, understudy, create silence in the case of Bangladesh. The dreadful truth, which demands a thorough investigation and detailed elaboration, is covered either in one line or short phrases – that too, at the end of chapters. Instead of debating the structural causes of Bengali disaffection with the Pakistani state, the emphasis is on the conspiracy hatched by the anti-Pakistan forces led by India. Hence, the idea that language is the "cloak of thought" fits in the case of dismemberment of Eastern Wing where more facts are concealed and masked, than revealed and unmasked.

Conclusion

The content analysis of the selected textbooks reveals that both the regimes have almost similar approach toward reimagining and reproducing the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 and Pakistan in 1971. Zia took the initiative of indoctrinating ideology and Islamizing education through the "Education Policy of 1979." Musharraf, on the other hand, tried to deradicalize the textbooks in 2002 and 2006. However, he met with failure due to the resistance from JI, which has dominance in education bureaucracy.

Moreover, the content analysis suggests that both the partitions are carried out differently in the official national narratives. For example, in the Partition of 1947, the religion played an active role, the enemy was from "outside the state," and "liberation" was the dominant theme of narratives. While in the Partition of 1971, the religion remained dormant, the enemy was from "within the state," and "conspiracy" was the dominant theme of narratives. That is why the textbooks give more attention and space to the events related to the Partition of 1947 because Pakistan was an emergent state while less space to the events related to the Partition of 1971 because Pakistan was a parent state. Therefore, in the former case, the story is carried out as glory and triumph while in the latter case, the tale is portrayed as sorrow and pain. Thus, two rival accounts and opposing sagas of the two partitions are told in the textbooks mainly to achieve the goal of nation building and state formation by creating collective national memory.

To accomplish this objective, the Hegelian approach of "philosophical" history is adopted where historical events and facts are manipulated. Moreover, certain characters, personalities, events, incidents, periods, and regions of choice or interest are selected while others are ignored or excluded. In this process, some groups – ethnic, religious, political, and social – are excluded or otherised since they are determined as enemies.

Contrary to this, some historians and analysts argue that "the state-patronised curriculum fosters secular nationalism, rather than religious nationalism, which facilitates the process of nation building"[109] and national history "produces a generation who represents specific land, culture, religion, political ideology, art, and social ethics".[110] They support this argument by asserting that there is hardly a country or nation which does not teach and prepare its generations by indoctrinating its own national interpretation of the historical events. However, their argument is feeble and weak and has already been defied by the partition of Pakistan in 1971.

Thus, the textbooks in Pakistan have miserably failed to develop the critical sense on the one hand and achieve the goal of collective national memory on the other hand. Their compilers, ill-equipped with the updated knowledge and skills, follow a tunnel vision of history – that is directed by the state – for preparing them. As a result, a distorted, biased, and incomplete history is produced. This, in turn, produces a binary opposition to promote the otherness. This narrowed construction of nationalism not only incapacitates the thinking process but also leads to rambling and selected version of history which fails to create any historical consciousness among students and the general public. To sum up, the state-patronized curriculum and syllabi, instead of imparting the rational and objective knowledge about historical events among the young minds, are indoctrinating the students with the majoritarian nationalism which is thriving at the cost of otherising the minority groups.

Notes

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Appendix

List of Textbooks Examined

Pakistan Studies

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Pakistan Studies Textbook for Class IX–X. Lahore: Punjab Textbook Board, 1980.
Pakistan Studies Textbook for Class IX–X. Lahore: Punjab Textbook Board, 1981.
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Cinema of Bangladesh: Absence of 1947 and abundance of 1971

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Abstract

Bangladesh got liberated from Pakistan through a bloody war in 1971. But the country was also a victim of 1947 Partition of India. The Partition not only split India also divided Bengal and Punjab. The East Bengal with Muslim majority got a new name East Pakistan. However, the country Pakistan with two wings with 1200 miles of Indian territory in between, could not stick together for long. In the memory of Bangladeshi people 1971 is relatively fresh and in the contemporary Bangladeshi politics 1971 still matters. The winding political trajectory of Bangladesh has influenced the discourses of cinema – making less films on 1947 Partition and more films on 1971 Liberation War. Different art forms have portrayed both 1947 and 1971 – the two historical incidents that heavily shaped the political and cultural nature of Bangladesh. This article will investigate why there is scarcity of 1947 films and abundance of 1971 films in Bangladesh. The article will also scrutinize how dominant historiography engulf the body of the films and discard alternative historiography. In examining these queries, the method would be a historical account of film production and its content and a few cases would be studied to get the picture in depth.

Bangladesh was liberated from Pakistan through a bloody war in 1971. However, the country was also a victim of the 1947 Partition of India. Divided by religion, the Partition not only split the Indian sub-continent but also divided Bengal and Punjab. East Bengal with a Muslim majority was renamed East Pakistan and West Bengal became part of India, which was a land of Hindu majority. The partition of India compelled people, especially in Bengal and Punjab, to leave their homes, cross borders, and take refuge in a new country. The ultimate result was the suffering of people.

However, geographically, the country of Pakistan with two wings of land of 1200 miles of Indian territory in between could not cement together for long. Although the two wings had commonality in religion, they had differences in language, culture, and ethnicity. There was economic disparity between the two wings. The East gained Bengali as the national

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language through bloodshed in 1952, which contributed to Bengali nationalism among the people. Bengali nationalism received wide acceptance in the autonomous movement of the 1960s. It is to be noted that Muslims from Bengal were the forerunners of a Pakistan movement that was ultimately developed with religious concentrations (I call "Muslimness"). Nawabs of East Bengal formed the All India Muslim League in 1906. However, immediately after formation of Pakistan, the conflict between the two wings seemed increasingly evident. The central West carried a sense of supremacy, and they treated the east as a colony (Feldman[1] and Siddiqi[2] summarize it as "a double colonialism" and "double cloak of colonialism," respectively). The East did not obtain the power though their key political party Bangladesh Awami League (AL) although they received an absolute majority in the 1970 Pakistan election. The people of East became increasingly agitated and there was a military crackdown at midnight on March 25, 1971 when the war started. Through the resistance of freedom fighters and the diplomatic and military support from India, Bangladesh was liberated from Pakistan on December 16, 1971.

In the memory of Bangladeshi people, 1971 is relatively fresh and in today's Bangladeshi politics, 1971 still matters. The father of the nation and the AL leader President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (also referred to as Mujib) was killed in 1975 through a military coup. Subsequent heads of state General Ziaur Rahman and General H M Ershad, directly or indirectly, executed military rule and brought back pre-partition religious politics. Anti-Liberation forces such as the Muslim League and the Jamaat-E-Islami (JI) were reestablished in mainstream politics. For the first time since 1975, the AL returned to power in 1996 with the leadership of Mujib's daughter Sheikh Hasina. Since 2009, Hasina has maintained power, however, lately in a non-democratic manner through rigged elections in 2014 and 2018.

The winding political trajectory of Bangladesh has influenced the discourses of cinema, making less films regarding the 1947 Partition and more films that dealt with the 1971 Liberation War (LW). However, there has been almost no mainstream production dealing with the 1971 LW for nearly two decades since 1975. Parallely, independent filmmakers started making films related to 1971 in the late 1980s which were short in length and the films were distributed in non-thetrical alternative manners The number of productions related to 1971 LW increased in the new millennium as Sheikh Hasina has held power since 2009.

Different art forms have portrayed both the 1947 Partition (hereafter referred to as 1947) and the 1971 LW (hereafter referred to as 1971)—the two historical incident dates that directly or indirectly shaped the political and cultural nature of Bangladesh. Such historical incidents make people "productive" as Raychaudhuri suggests[3] and artists have continued producing "narratives." This article will analyze the nature and characteristics of

the films related to both 1947 and 1971. It will also investigate why there is a limited number of 1947 and a relative abundance of 1971 related films in Bangladesh. It will also examine how contemporary politics determine the content of these period films. This article will also scrutinize how dominant historiography engulfs the body of the films and discards alternative historiography. Narrative analysis of some selected texts will be used to investigate these questions. Additionally, Tanvir Mokammel, a film director who made films both on 1947 and on 1971, was interviewed. Intially, I present research that I found dealing with 1947 and 1971 in the historiography of Bangladesh.

Bangladeshi historiography of 1947 and 1971

In 1947, the British representative Cyril Radcliffe hastily drew the demarcation line for the two new states in South Asia, and he did it without substantial reasoning. Sayeed Ferdous calls it "surgery in rush;"[4] the result was a forced and painful exodus. Urvashi Butalia says, never before or since have so many people exchanged their homes and countries so quickly.[5] These newly drawn border lines severely affected the people of Punjab and Bengal as they divided the two provinces. Bhaskar Sarkar observed that the truncation was a bloody and protracted affair; roughly a million people were butchered in murderous riots and 10 to 12 million lost their homes and became hapless refugees.[6]

For Bengal, 1947 was the second Partition. Some historians[7] recognize that the first partition that was conducted by the British for Bengal in 1905, named *Bangabhanga*, was aimed at weakening nationalist politics by dividing the Bengal people along communal lines. Most educated Muslims of East Bengal supported the partition arguing that it would allow them to develop a Bengali Muslim identity by gaining political power and also evading the dominance of the Kolkata based *bhadralok*, which are the middle and upper middle-class absentee Hindu landowners who had been leading the culture and society of Kolkata. However, the Kolkata-based intelligentsia vehemently resisted *Bangabhanga*, first by portraying it as a "divide and rule" policy enacted by the British and through a fresh Bengali nationalist jingoism. They were successful and *Bangabhanga* was withdrawn. However, there were clear differences between Hindu and Muslim intellectuals in the perception of the two partitions. Ironically, Hindu intellectuals and politicians opposed the 1905 partition but advocated the major divide of 1947. Joya Chatterji[8] argued that dominant Hindu chauvinism was heavily responsible for the second partition of Bengal in 1947. The Kolkata-based intelligentsia excluded Muslims in the discourse of Bengali identity, and it is true that in 1920s, 1930s and 1940s the "Muslim" identity gained currency over the "Bengali" identity[9] in the Muslim community.

In Toor's view, the united province of Bengal had played a crucial role in the Muslim nationalist movement,[10] and Ahmed suggests that Bengali Muslims were the most vocal advocates of the Pakistan movement[11] as the Muslim League was formed in Dhaka in 1906. However, immediately after the formation of Pakistan, Dhaka-based Bengali Muslims detested the new identity due to the question of state language(s). Through five years of struggle, they earned Bengali as one of the state languages in 1952; whereas, central government operating in West Pakistan tried to impose Urdu as the singular national language. Through language movement, the movement for autonomy, and the demand for economic parities between two parts of Pakistan in the 1960s, Bengali nationalism grew quickly, especially among liberals and students. There was a departure from the national consciousness of the pre-1947 Pakistan movement. This amnesia was confirmed due to the genocide committed by the Pakistan Army in 1971 and the victory of the Bengalis against West Pakistan. In the historical narratives, both in public discourse and scholars' body of work (as well as in the narratives of cinema), the relatively recent incident of 1971 is substantially alive, but 1947 is like a forgotten past. Feldman finds an explanation:

> Silence about Partition among Bangladeshi scholars may reflect the view that 1947 is not worthy of comment given the important 1971 struggles between East and West Pakistan. In this context, interest in the language movement that helped to realize Independence is evident, while a focus on Partition, which might expose what some experienced as the contradiction of supporting Pakistan and subsequent struggling for an independent Bangladesh is avoided.[12]

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman too was active in the Pakistan movement. His participation in the Pakistanmovement is rarely mentioned in historical accounts. Most social and political histories of Bangladesh offer only scant mention of the anticolonial struggle and the Partition in the 1940s.[13] Moreover, the issues of 1971 are still determining factors in today's Bangladeshi politics. The War of Independence is the defining moment of contemporary Bangladesh history and has played a major role in creating national identity. In broad terms, the majority of the citizens of Bangladesh are Bengali Muslims and it is apparent that ethnofactors (I call "Bengaliness") contribute to the determination of national identity, which is supported by the constitution.[14] Nevertheless, there are groups, inclined to the Pakistan movement, who have contested this view of identity and believe the religious aspect ("Muslimness") is the key factor of the national identity of Bangladesh. These views may have a direct link to the spirit of the Pakistan movement, which went undercurrent due to the 1952 language movement and 1971 LW. However, after Mujib's killing in 1975 and subsequent direct or indirect military regimes led by General Ziaur Rahman in the late 1970s and General

Ershad in the 1980s brought back the spirit of the Pakistan movement through Islamization of the state, reforms in the constitution, and reestablishment of the defeated people of JI and Muslim League in the politics.

The filmmakers generally believe in Bengaliness as the key component of national identity of Bangladesh as stated in the constitution. In my earlier paper, I have shown that the films made on 1971 have portrayed Bengaliness as the preferred identity and Muslimness must be condemned and vilified.[15] However, recently, some characters representing Muslim identity have been portrayed in positive roles and this change was also been determined by contemporary global and local politics.

Feldman finds the absence of the voices of East Bengal/East Pakistan/Bangladesh in the South Asian Partition narratives.[16] She examines this absence in terms of exclusion and silence. By exclusion she refers to the "absence of the experiences of East Bengal in constructing the Indian and Pakistani narrative of Partition."[17] By silence she means "the limited attention Bengalis and Bangladeshis pay to the Partition experience in building a nationalist consciousness and interpreting the struggle for Independence."[18] Feldman's theoretical notion of the absence of the voices of East Bengal in the Partition narratives will be consulted in this paper to establish the argument of the absence of films made on 1947 Partition and abundance of the films made on 1971 LW in Bangladesh. According to her, East Bengal serves as a metaphor for the place that is constructed as "other, invisible, different and silenced"[19] in the regional politics of South Asia. The challenge here is to understand and explain the absence (of films made on 1947). To show the reasons of abundance (of films made on 1971) is a relatively easier task to do. Hence, the other theoretical notion for this paper, the idea of "prolonged Partition," is also directed at the Partition.

Sayeed Ferdous observes, unlike Punjab Partition, the Bengal Partition was a prolonged one.[20] Even after 1947, in East Bengal, there was a slow and silent violence, with passports issued in 1951 and the border remaining open until 1954. There were at least two communal riots (this time violent attacks on Hindu people by Muslims) in 1950 and in 1964 (the attack in 1964 included indigenous people too) in East Pakistan. As a result, there were two waves of exodus from East Pakistan to India. Even in the 1960s, when a nationalist uprising was part of the demand by East Pakistan for autonomy from the central military regime of West Pakistan, Hindus were still migrating to India and Muslims were still coming to East Pakistan, although in lesser numbers. Ferdous argues that the Partition affected lives and precipitated prolonged consequences for the people living in East Bengal/Bangladesh.[21] The creation of Bangladesh in 1971 and the occasional tension and killing at the India-Bangladesh border in the post-1971 period is also indicative of prolonged partition. Ananya Jahanara Kabir delves into the instances of violence, memory, melancholia, and modernity in between 1947 and 1971 in her book titled

Partition's Post-Amnesia and argues they are interlinked.[22] However, both in popular and scholarly narratives, it seems the history of Bangladesh began in 1952. Though migration continued in post-Partition and even postindependence time, for Bangladesh, unlike the other two South Asian countries, 1971 has overshadowed 1947 and the Partition has become a forgotten event. This paper will examine the nature and the reasons of both the absence and abundance of the two great incidents as seen in the films made by Bangladeshi filmmakers. The next section will provide a brief overview of the films made on the Partition and the LW.

Cinema of the partition

In between the Partition and Bangladesh's 1971 LW, there was almost no film that dealt with the Partition, even though the Dhaka film industry was established in 1957. In fifty years of the post-Liberation period, there are only three feature films and one documentary that directly delineate the historic incident.

Set in East Pakistan, *Palanka* (*The Bedstead*, 1975) was made by Indian director Rajen Tarafdar, which was a co-production of Bangladesh and India. Twenty-two years later, Tanvir Mokammel made the next film titled *Chitra Nadir Pare* (*Quiet Flows the River Chitra*, 1999). Another eighteen years later, Akram Khan made *Khancha* (*The Cage*, 2017), an adaptation from a short story of the same title written by Hasan Azizul Huq. Tanvir Mokammel also made a feature-length documentary titled *Seemantorekha* (*The Borderline*, 2017), which records the broader aspects of the Partition from the perspectives of both Indian and Bangladeshi people. His recent feature film *Rupsha Nodir Banke* (*Quiet Flows the River Rupsha*, 2020) consists of some references to the Partition. The narrative of the films *Chitra* and *Khancha* shows the Partition was "prolonged" (as Ferdous suggests,[23] Zamindar calls it "long Partition"[24]). The partition narratives showed that Hindu centricity and communal violence were essential components in these two films. These theoretical notions will also be used in this paper, which include *Palanka* and *Seemantorekha* in the discussion.

Palanka is a poignant story that is weaved in a rural setting of post-Partition East Pakistan where the tension among a Hindu aristocrat Dhala Karta, a Muslim poor Moqbul, and the clique of a newly emerged Muslim elites evolved around an artifact, the famous bedstead from the aristocrat's palace-like house. The film was adapted from a short story written by Narendranath Mitra.

Set in the post-1947 partition of India, the film *Chitra* showed that many Hindu people were migrating to India from a small southwestern town located on the banks of the river Chitra. However, a stubborn lawyer Shashikanta refuses to leave his motherland. The atmosphere of the entire country was

intense in the 1960s and a movement began in Dhaka against the military government demanding the autonomy of East Pakistan. Shashikanta dies due to a heart attack and Badal, the boyfriend of Shashikanta's daughter Minoti, was shot to death in a procession at Dhaka University campus. Also, by 1964, local communal tension had mounted. At the end of the film, Minoti and her aunt leave the banks of the Chitra for India.

The film *Khancha* tells the story of a Hindu family in East Pakistan who wanted to move to India for a better life in the post-Partition era. The middle-aged couple Ombujakkho and Sarojini wanted to follow migrating people by leaving their homestead. They oscillate between staying in their toppling house or the dream of starting fresh in a new country. After several failed attempts, the film ends with an outburst and a cry by Sarojini.

Tanvir Mokammel's feature length documentary *Seemantorekha* tends to chronicle the big picture of the Partition by describing the context and consequences of it. The area of exploration for Mokammel was following the trail of the Hindu people who migrated to India from East Bengal. The huge influx of refugees was deployed by the Indian government to eighteen provinces immediately after the Partition, and the documentary unit interviewed some of the displaced people. The director also interviewed some intellectuals and ordinary people who emigrated to East Pakistan from India. The film *Seemantorekha* tried to establish how "unnecessary" the Partition was and concludes with a hope that one day the fences at the borderline will be demolished and people will mingle freely as they used to do prior to the Partition.

The storyline of both *Chitra* and *Khancha* started in 1947 and ended in 1964. Both the films portrayed the pain and agony of two families who were affected by the Partition. However, the motives of the two families were quite opposite: Shashikanta's family in *Chitra* did not want to leave East Bengal when all other neighboring Hindu families were leaving, and Ombujakkha's family in *Khancha* wanted to leave for West Bengal. However, the ultimate result of their endeavors was the same—the failure of their aspirations. Shashikanta's family had to leave and Ombujakkha's family had to remain, which was in opposition to their will. Shashikanta himself died by heart attack, the communal violence increased, and the rest of the family left the banks of the Chitra for Kolkata. Ombujakkha tried to exchange his homestead, contacted many "parties," but ended without any result. Their attempt to remain or to leave continued until 1964. Ferdous thinks far from being an event of the past, Partition is a living process in the present, replete with all its historical baggage.[25] The Partition can be linked with the LW of Bangladesh, as well as the occasional killing in post-independence period in the Bangladesh-India border. In *Chitra*, Shashikanta's daughter Minoti had a love affair with Badal, an activist of the autonomous movement against the Pakistani military dictatorship who

died in the procession due to police gunfire. *Palanka* also delineates that the Partition was a prolonged one as the timeline of the story shows the year 1951. The Partition was not completed until then and people were still leaving for India. The effect of the Partition made Dhala Karta helpless in one way and ill-tempered in another. He not only lost his power and dignity, he became adverse enough to conspire against his on-call errand boy and companion Moqbul.

The Partition films made by the Indian directors remained Hindu centric. The Indian director, known as "the emblematic mourner" and an immigrant from East Bengal, Ritwik Ghatak is credited for making the best films on the Partition.[26] Sarkar states, the birth of Bangladesh in 1971 raised new hopes of pan-Bengali cultural collaboration and provided Ghatak with a chance to film *Titas Ekti Nadir Nam* (*The Name of a River*, 1973) in his beloved East Bengal.[27] In his last film *Jukti, Takko, Ar Gappo* (*Reason, Debate, and a Story*, 1974), Ghatak clearly expresses his desire for the cultural unification of the two Bengals. However, Sugata Sinha argues that the abundance of Hindu myths, symbols, and icons used in the visual language failed to establish the idea of a cultural unification of the two Bengals.[28] Rather, dependence on Hindu iconographs remained a barrier to the proposed cultural unification.

Surprisingly, however, the films made by the Bengali Muslims from Bangladesh are also largely based on the Hindu people. Both Shashikanta's family in *Chitra* and Ombujakkha's family in *Khancha* are Hindu. In *Chitra*, some minor characters such as Shashikanta's best friend Shamsuddin and his daughter Minu's boyfriend Badal are Muslims. In *Khancha* there are some minor characters who emigrated to East Pakistan from India. There was a family who was struggling to cope in the new place, and the daughter of the family started working as a sex worker for survival. In both films, a Hindu cultural environment was created by using chants from Gita, including scenes of worshipping, among others. However, in *Palanka*, one of the two major characters was Muslim and there were also some other minor Muslim characters. However, Hindu centrism is one core characteristic of all the films made on the Partition. Among these three feature films, only the film *Khancha* tells the perspective of emigrated Muslims. Akram Khan extracted this anecdote from another short story ("Atmoja O Ekti Korobi Gachh" ["The Daughter and an Oleander Tree"]) written by Hasan Azizul Huq and added it to *Khancha*.

The documentary *Seemantorekha* also largely remained Hindu centric and the views of emigrated Muslims from India to Bangladesh received less attention and space. However, an explanation of this was provided in the film when the director interviewed the writers and intellectuals from both countries. They argued the views of the Muslim people are less represented in the Partition discourse because they wanted a new country of their own and

they got it. Due to the migration of Hindu people to India, they were given an empty space with promises of new jobs and businesses. In the interview, the Indian writer Atin Bandopadhyay says, "due to the Partion, I think Muslims have found their own place, it was needed . . . a new nation has evolved." Bangladeshi writers Anisuzzaman or Hasan Azizul Huq expressed their ideas in the same ways. However, the tale of the Muslim family in *Khancha* states they had pain and trauma too.

The Partition films made in Bangladesh chronicle violent communal politics. The Partition could not settle the issue of communalism that grew in the pre-Partition period. Rather, a permanent inscription of communalism in the psyche of the people remains a major challenge in South Asia. The directors rightly portrayed that crisis in their texts. *Chitra* as a work of fiction linked the factual incident of communal violence in 1964 that affected Shashikanta's family. Shashikanta's reaction to the announcement of the riot aired on the radio suggested it occurred frequently. Parallel to the story of Shashikanta's family, the film showed a Hindu woman who was followed and raped by some Muslim youths. If there are direct communal politics, the indirect communalisms are also delineated in the film. While Minu was leaving for Kolkata, her Muslim friend Salma confessed that they used to call Hindu people red ants (harmful) and Muslim people black ants (harmless). *Malaun* (an Arabic word, literally meaning cursed) as a racial slur was used by the boys while humiliating Ombujakkha's younger son in the film *Khancha*. In *Khancha*, the incident of riot or tension were not the key points of the storyline; however, in a scene the postmaster at the post office tells Ombujakkha, "how can I even ask you all to stay? Just the other day five died in the Raipur riot." In *Palanka* too, there are some references of direct and indirect communalism.

Cinema of the liberation war

Among all films made on 1971 LW of Bangladesh, only a few films visualized the real time actions and incidents of the war. Due to the nature of the genre, documentary creatively treats the actualities. *Stop Genocide* (1971) by Zahir Raihan is the best documentary made on 1971. After twenty-four years, Tareque and Catherine Masud made *Muktir Gaan* (*Song of Freedom*, 1995) based on the found footage captured by American filmmaker Lear Levin. *Stop Genocide* was made in black and white, but *Muktir Gaan* brought the LW in color nearly after two and a half decades of the war. Some foreign directors and TV channels made documentaries and news reels during the war. Among them *Nine Months to Freedom* (1972) by Indian director S. Sukhdev was the most important one. Many subsequent films including *Muktir Gaan* used the footages from this film.

The significance of Zahir Raihan's *Stop Genocide* is commendable and its impact on discourses of the LW and independent cinema in Bangladesh is enormous. Fahmida Akhter analyzes *Stop Genocide* through the lens of Third Cinema and notes that it records the events of the war in order to bring the trauma of Bangladeshis to global attention, thereby provoking collective action from the world community to stop the genocide.[29] It also unmasks the conditions and complexities of the war, through a dialectical visual style. *Muktir Gaan* created a nearly similar impact. It was the second significant film on the LW with real footage made by any director from Bangladesh, and first time in color, and released decades after the making of films on LW were halted. The film contributed to bringing back the discourses of the LW through smashing visual narrative. Due to the renewed discourse of the LW in which *Muktir Gaan* contributed and the bad governance of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) in power, AL came back into power after two decades in 1996. According to Naeem Mohaiemen, *Muktir Gaan* ended a long, politically induced drought in films about the 1971 war.[30] He also finds audience's relationship to the film in 1995 was initially framed through joy and discovery after a long drought of visual images. After the events of 2013 (especially the Shahbag uprising due to the demand for trials of war criminals and a counter movement from that of the right-wing forces that included JI who were against the LW), a thorough search for evidence was made where this film was an inspiration. As an active participant of the Shahbag movement, I organized film screenings in Shahbag square under the banner of Moviyana and other Film Societies, and we showed *Muktir Gaan* several times for the participants and visitors to the movement. Mohaiemen reports, the film's sequel *Muktir Kotha* (*A Tale of Freedom*, 1999) was submitted as legal evidence in the tribunal case against "Khokon Rajakar," a war criminal.[31]

After the independence, the scope of capturing original footage of the war went away. In post-independence time, most documentaries depended on oral histories. The major share of the films were based on the sacrifice and contributions of the *Birangonas*.[32] Yasmine Kabir's *Swadhinata* (*Freedom*, 2003) is a remarkable film on that subject. Farjana Boby's *Bishkanta* (*The Poison Thorn*, 2015) too tells the stories of three *Birangonas*. Shabnam Ferdousi's *Janmasathi* (*Born Together*, 2017) includes both the issues of *Birangona* and the war child. Tanvir Mokammel's biopic *Tajuddin Ahmed: Nissongo Sarathi* (*Tajuddin Ahmed: An Unsung Hero*, 2007) is also based on oral history focusing on Tajuddin Ahmed, the deputy of Mujib. An exceptional documentary based on oral history was *Muktir Kotha* (*Words of Freedom*, 1996). When *Muktir Gaan* was exhibited alternatively throughout the nation, some audiences claimed they also fought for the nation but that the film did not tell their stories. The film unit started documenting their versions of the LW, which included the views of peasants, women, and indigenous people, and

a new film was made. *Muktir Kotha* established that the LW was not a war fought only by the dominant urban middle class. It was basically a peoples' war. Tareque Masud says that we did not make the film, the film made us.[33]

If documentaries are direct records of the LW, in this case, feature films appeared as emotional tributes with a mix of imagination and nationalistic expression of the auspicious incident. However, in some cases, feature films on the LW have become the political stands of the directors. Just after the independence, a few films were made due to the immediate effect of the war. *Ora Egaro Jon* (*The Magnificent Eleven*, 1972, dir. Chashi Nazrul Islam) was a saga of the heroic efforts of the freedom fighters. Real freedom fighters performed in the film, which made it look authentic. The dilemma of a confused and fearful theater actor who did not participate in the war was delineated in *Orunodoyer Ognisakkhi* (*The Dawn Observer*, 1972, dir. Subhash Dutta). *Dhire Bohe Meghna* (*Quite Flows the Meghna*, 1973, dir. Alamgir Kabir) was narrated from the point of view of an Indian woman who visited post-Liberation Bangladesh where her fiancé, an Indian Airforce soldier, died in the war. She had an inauspicious impression of the newly formed country but her thoughts had changed after meeting the people and learning about the adversity the country had faced. *Abar Tora Manush Haw* (*Be Human Again*, 1973, dir. Khan Ataur Rahman) invites frustrated youths who have been misguided by post-Liberation anomie to come back to a regular life. *Megher Onek Rong* (*Clouds Have Many Colors*, 1976, dir. Harun-Or-Rashid) shows how a family is destroyed due to war and how the life of a child becomes precarious. Chashi Nazrul Islam again portrayed the heroism of the freedom fighters and Bengali soldiers in his second film on the LW, *Sangram* (The War, 1974).

One can notice the diversity in the storyline in the films made immediately after the war. However, one common limitation could be easily found in those films: females are very helpless in the time of war and they are the ultimate victims. The rape incidents are inevitably present in the plot and rape is represented as a shame or losing *Ijjat*/honor of women. Unfortunately, the rape scenes were sometimes used as a commercial component. It is evident in the commercially motivated film *Bagha Bangali* (*The Bengal Tiger*, 1972, dir. Ananda), but most of the better films are infected by the same limitation. In the films made in this phase, there were no characters such as a woman freedom fighter.

In 1975, the founder of the nation, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was brutally killed by some young Army officers. After Mujib's killing, the basic principles and spirits of the LW were taken away, some constitutionally and some through state-sponsored practices that had a resemblance to Muslimness, the pre-Partition stance of Bengali-Muslims. For one and half decades after his killing, the country was under direct or indirect military dictatorship and instead of secularization, the state started patronizing Islamization. The religious ideology of the pre-Partition period was brought back. There was also an effect on the film industry. The stories started traveling to the Arab world from

the Bengal delta. Films with titles such as *Hoor-e-Arab* and *Bulbul-e-Bagdad* had been frequently produced in Bangladesh Film Development Corporation (BFDC) in the 1980s. Additionally, the number of films on the LW decreased near to zero. In between 1977 and 1990, there was only one film on the LW, titled *Kalmilata* (1981, dir. Shahidul Haq Khan).

In the mid-1980s, an independent film movement started outside of the mainstream industry. The members of the film societies with a commitment to making arthouse films began making low budget short films in a 16-mm format. They chose the LW as a regular plot point as a protest against the military *janta,* who were rehabilating anti-Liberation forces in the society and were bringing back the ideologies of pre-Partition Muslimness. The first short independent film *Agami* (*Toward*, 1984, dir, Morshedul Islam) narrates the rehabilitation of anti-Liberation forces and the helplessness of the freedom fighters in the society. The second film *Hooliya* (*Wanted*, 1984, dir. Tanvir Mokammel) tells a story of a left-wing political activist in the pre-Liberation period. The earlier short filmmakers such as Tanvir Mokammel, Morshedul Islam, and Tareque Masud made full length feature films later and pulled up Bangladeshi Cinema to a new height. All of them made several films based on the LW. Tareque Masud's *Matir Moina* (*The Clay Bird*, 2002), Tanvir Mokammel's *Nadir Naam Madhumoti* (*The River Called Madhumoti*, 1995) and Morshedul Islam's *Amar Bandhu Rashed* (*My Friend Rashed*, 2004) are a few titles worth mentioning. Shamim Akhter's *Shilalipi* (2002) is also an important film that is a biopic of female journalist Selina Parvin during the LW. *Aguner Poroshmoni* (1994) by Humayun Ahmed and *Guerrilla* (2011) by Nasiruddin Yousuf are two films that narrate the guerrilla operations in Dhaka city during the LW. In 2004, two films were made with the same theme: under military attack, people fleeing by boat from their homestead and looking for a safe place. The titles are *Shyamol Chhaya* (2004, dir. Humayun Ahmed) and *Joyjatra* (2004, dir. Tauquir Ahmed). Upon torture and violence by Pakistani military, an ordinary college professor finally revolts in *Meghmollar* (2015), which was made by Zahidur Rahim Anjan and adapted from a story by the eminent writer Akhtaruzzaman Ilias. The ordinary man's sudden and desperate revolt was also seen in the film *Anil Bagchir Ekdin* (*Anil Bagchi's Day*, 2015). Adapted from Humayun Ahmed's novel and directed by Morshedul Islam, the film tells the story of Anil who, despite knowing it means obvious death, the young man does not conceal his religious Hindu identity to the Pakistani military.

One limitation of the films based on the LW is that they represent the dominant discourses: the brutality of Pakistani military, the resistance and heroism of freedom fighters, the war crimes committed by the *Rajakar*s (the Bengali collaborators to the Pakistani military), and the loss of sanctity of women. These issues have been portrayed time and again. The views of the urban or rural middle class have occupied the screen and the films have failed to portray it as a peoples' war.

After the rebirth of democracy in 1991, the films based on 1971 were once again being produced. After the AL's takeover of power in 1996, it was expedited. However, this is the phase when the dominant discourses of the LW were set on the screen. Immediately after the LW, the themes of the films based on the LW were diverse, as previously discussed. In comparison, the subject of the films after the AL's takeover became cliché.

The *Rajakar* characters in these films were always clad with Islamic attire and through this, the progressive and pro-LW directors tried to highlight and reassert the war crimes done by the members of the religion based political party JI. The directors' mission was to uphold the Bengali identity (I call Bengaliness) over Muslim identity (Muslimness). Additionally, through this, they declared their stand on contemporary politics of Bangladesh where they condemned the BNP and JI (the followers of Muslimness) and supported the loose alliance between AL and the left fronts (the followers of Bengaliness). However, with the post-9/11 backlash and the aggression of western forces on Afghanistan and Iraq, there was global upsurge of Muslim identity that affected Bangladeshi filmmakers too. Now the people with Muslim attire were also seen in the roles of freedom fighters (examples are *Shyamol Chhaya* and *Megher Por Megh* [Dir. Chashi Nazrul Islam]) Interestingly, the portrayal of religious people as both *Rajakar*s and freedom fighters was determined by the contemporary political clout, both local and global.

Rubayiat Hossain did a radical experiment in a LW based film, *Meherjaan* (2011). The tagline of the film was "loving the other," where a Bengali girl fell in love with a Pakistani soldier. In the setting of WWII, there are some films where a love affair of a girl with enemy soldier have been shown, but Bangladeshi audiences, especially Dhaka-based progressive and pro-LW intelligentsia, were not ready to accept this. The furor extended to the online sphere and there was an organized campaign against the film, which caused the producer to pull down the film from the theaters. Until then, the trial of the war criminals had not taken place (which took place in the 2013–2015 period) and Pakistan as a state never apologized for the 1971 genocide. The dominant audience was not ready to accept this kind of love stories; rather, they preferred perpetual production of hatred against Pakistanis on the screen.

Concluding discussion

For Bangladesh, the experience of 1971 has overshadowed 1947. The people of Bangladesh live in "Partition's post amnesias"[34] and the wound of the LW is relatively fresh. The victory in the war and the creation of a new nation generates a feeling of pride and is worthy of celebration among Bangladeshis, although the loss in 1971 is also colossal in number and size. That might be the reason for the low number of productions of films on 1947 partition. I have already mentioned, there are only three feature films and one documentary made by Bangladeshi directors. Despite a latter incident, there are fifty-five feature films, twenty-four

short films, and thirty-nine documentaries made on the 1971 LW made by Bangladeshi directors.[35] Here is a perspective from Tanvir Mokammel, a filmmaker who made films both on the Partition and the LW:

> In 1971, things also happened in mammoth dimensions—three million killed, two hundred thousand women raped, ten million people left their homes and had to migrate to another country. The numbers are almost biblical. Besides, 1971 war is also more recent than the events of the 1947 Partition. So, it is obvious that 1971 figures in much more in our cinema than 1947.[36]

And he tends to justify his filmography as it stands:

> Though I have made films both on 1947 Partition and on 1971 war, my films on the 1971 Liberation War are higher in number. The reason is obvious. I saw and experienced the war. As a teenager, I witnessed the gruesome murders, tortures on women, the inhuman cruelties by Pakistan army and their Islamic cohorts the *Razakars* and the *Al-Badars*, the sufferings of the minority Hindus and the refugees. All these must had a tremendous impact on my tender teenage psyche. So whenever I ponder to make a film, an incident or memory, from 1971 war crop ups in my mind. I think it is true for a whole generation of filmmakers like me. And that's why the films on the 1971 war is much higher in number in our *oeuvres* than on 1947.[37]

In Mokammel's view, there are at least three reasons for the absence of 1947 and the abundance of 1971: the degree of the incident, the immediacy of the incident, and the filmmakers' personal experience. However, if compared to literature, the situation might not be the same. Among the Bengali fictions written in Bangladesh, there are a few novels and short stories on the Partition that reveal the accounts of Bengali Muslims, the majority people of Bangladesh. The notable novel titled *Agoonpakhi* (2006) by Hasan Azizul Huq is one of the greatest novels on the Partition. *Kalo Borof* (1992) by Mahmudul Haq and *O Te Ojogor* (1978) by Abdul Mannan Syed are among many others. But the number of films on the Partition can be counted as *too low*. Similar to the number of cinematic offerings, there is an enormous number of novels and short stories on the 1971 LW.

In the political discourse of Bangladesh, 1947 remains a "historical incident" that happened ages before. Bangladesh celebrated fifty years of independence in 2021. In the time of fiftieth anniversary of the Partition, Bangladeshi newspapers and other media exhibited a muted interest in the anniversary or ignored it altogether.[38] Siddiqi summarizes, "1947 does not merit remembrance, let alone celebration."[39] Apart from Mokammel's three aspects, in the contemporary politics, the LW is still a key factor. Set by political and cultural elites and implemented by the current AL government who have maintained power since 2009, the hegemonic political discourse determines moral acceptance or negation of any entity (a person, an organization, or any idea) in the society and the determining lens here is whether that entity is pro- or anti-Liberation. This hegemonic discourse influences cinema too. Present Bangladeshi government not only encourage making films on the LW;[40]

also, they offer few grants, the number which has been gradually increasing and the LW receives priority for awarding grants for proposed screenplays. *The Daily Star* reported on June 15, 2021 that twenty films received the grant for the 2020–2021 fiscal year in three categories: the LW, general, and children's' films.[41] Patronization of the government in power is another reason behind the abundance of films made on the LW.

Similar to Indian Cinema on the Partition, Hindu centrism also remains a limitation for Partition films made in Bangladesh. In all three feature films, the main protagonists were Hindus. The documentary was no exception. In *Palanka*, one of the two protagonists was a sub-altern Muslim. The film also portrayed the emergence of Muslim elites and fall of the once-empowered Hindu aristocrat in a rural setting. Bangladeshi Partition films have rightly portrayed communal politics and post-partition violence. Mokammel thinks there was no "serious riot" in post-Partition West Bengal since the Partition days and that the migration of Muslims from India to East Pakistan decreased and almost stopped.[42] Viewed from the opposite direction, Mokammel says:

> After 1947 Partition, officially 5.8 million of Hindus migrated from East Bengal. But the actual number is much higher, as besides 1947, Hindus from East Bengal had also migrated after the riots of 1950, 1964, 1971, in 1975 after the killing of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in 1992 after the post-Ayudha carnage, and even as late as in 2001 when BNP won the national election and created a havoc on the Hindu families, especially in the rural areas. It is assumed around 150 million Hindus have migrated from East Bengal so far.[43]

According to him, the effect of partition created many plights to the Hindu communities in comparison to the Muslims. Pakistan was a like a "promised land" for them. Thus, Mokammel justfies Hindu-centrism in the films made on 1947 Partition. Also, the films, especially made by Tanvir Mokammel, portray the Partition as perhaps was unnecessary. It is clearly stated in *Seemantorekha*. In *Chitra*, there was a crazy tramp character who used to stop people suddenly and asked them, "Are you going or coming? Its all the same! Going and coming are same anyway!" The crazy man's philosophical query raises the question of the necessity of the Partition.

The idea of prolonged Partition someway denotes many of Bangladesh's affairs today and have some links with the 1947 Partition. In that sense, the LW as well as the border killings in post-independence period are directly or indirectly connected to the Partition. The Partition films also show the process of the Partition went on for years. In *Chitra* the character Badal was a link between 1947 and 1971. In *Palanka*, the son of Dhala Karta visits post-independence Bangladesh with his family at the beginning of the film who migrated to India immediately after the Partition. But the Bangladeshi films made on the LW never relate

anything to the Partition. Sometimes the Language Movement of 1952 or the autonomy movement in the 1960s remain as the context, but the storyline never traces back to 1947.

Most of the films made on 1971 are based on the dominant discourses of the LW: Freedom fighters are always the heroes, women are always the victims, and demonic *Rajakar*s are essentially Islamists. Sometimes *Rajakar*s become more important as villains than the Pakistani military (as seen in *Agami; Nadir Naam Madhumoti*; and *Rabeya* [2008, dir. Tanvir Mokammel]). The reason is that the *Rajakar*s in 1971 were from Islamist parties such as JI, which is still a major political party in post-independence Bangladesh, members of which must be denounced by the pro-Liberation filmmakers. The directors enthusiastically want to show the audiences of the new generation the role of JI in the moment of the creation of Bangladesh. Filmmakers' relentless attempt to portray the war crimes committed by the JI people in 1971 contributed to strengthening the discourse of war crimes that became significant later in the Shahbag movement and in post-Shahbag trial of war criminals in between 2013 and 2015. However, in the time of the global rise of Muslimness, some Islamists are also shown as freedom fighters. I wrote in another paper:

> In earlier films [on LW] the Muslim characters [clad with Islamist attires] were portrayed as singularly negative characters, but in recent films the Muslim characters are portrayed as singularly positive characters. The recent portrayal of identity issues can be seen as inconsistent with reality, like the earlier representations. The reality is always somewhere in between.[44]

Most of the films on the LW forget to mention that it was a people's war. People from all classes and background participated in the war, as both victims and as resistants. The portrayals may give the wrong message that the dominant middle class were the only actors in the war. Only *Muktir Kotha* tries to depict that people from subaltern background—peasants, women, indigenous people—were also active participants in the war. The sheer victimhood of women is a condemnable issue here. Only in recent times have some documentaries shown the heroic roles of women in the LW. Kaberi Gayen observes that women could not be heroes in the war films. They could only be the *Birangona*s, the connotation of which is now the raped women, and thus "dishonoured, disgraced and fallen" women.[45]

It is to be noted again, there were almost no production of LW films in between 1975 and 1990, as the rulers of this period directly or indirectly upheld the spirit of the creation of Pakistan (Muslimness). As I have mentioned earlier, through state patronization, themes of the films referencing the Arab world increased and was the reason in the late 1970s and the 1980s for the decrease in the number films made on the ideologies of the LW, which are secular in nature. In recent years, if the number is higher, the discourses are

dominant: portrayal of Mujib as the only or supreme leader of the LW and the lack of the reference of it as the peoples' war. In the global rise of Islamization after 9/11, Muslimness received attention in the films referencing the 1971 LW. Actually, the numbers, as well as the preferred discourses of the LW films, depended on who was in power and what identity discourses were dominating, both locally and globally.

Another point to observe is that the leading independent directors who grew to prominence in the 1970s and 1980s (Mokammel, Islam, and Masud) chose re-exploration of 1971 on the screen as their artistic mission, but the next generation of directors (Mostafa Sarwar Farooki, Nurul Alam Atique, Amitabh Reza, Kamar Ahmad Simon, and Rubaiyat Hossain) were less interested in period films; rather, they were more interested in post-globalized and contemporary complex issues of Bangladesh. Bangladeshi society, like others, has been going through a transformation from its early history. Contemporary postglobalized and post-modern time is shaped by two external factors: neoliberal economic and cultural globalization and globalization of Jihadist Islam in the post-9/11 era. It is no surprise that the contemporary filmmakers are more interested, if not always, in the contemporary issues. But the previous generation of filmmakers were interested in period drama that dealt with identity issues and their focus was mostly on 1971. Tareque Masud was ready to make a film (*Kagojer Phool* [*Paper Flower*]) based on 1947, but he died in an unfortunate road accident in 2011. However, for most of the filmmakers, except Mokammel, a period film means a film based on 1971, not on 1947.

All films made on the Partition in Kolkata and Dhaka are Hindu-centric (i.e., films made by Ghatak or Mokammel), which is not a rational response to what happened before and after 1947. Hindus suffered a lot, they continued leaving Bangladesh for India even after 1971. Muslims too have their experiences of pains and plights (a little reflection was found in *Khancha*). Although they got their promised land, Pakistan, there still are stories to be told of both the sufferings and satisfaction of the Muslims. Perhaps, Bangladeshi directors are caught by the dominant narrative of Hindu-centrism or Indo-centrism[46] or the absence of the voices of East Bengal (here I read as the "absence of the voices of Muslims" by amending Feldman's[47] proposition). Resurgent interest in the Partition has been promoted, in large measure in India, by efforts to understand the communal riots in India since the 1980s. Bangladeshi scholars (as well as the filmmakers) need to explore the Partition to understand the politico-cultural problems of today's Bangladesh as Ferdous suggests.[48] Feldman suggests including the experiences of East Bengal or Bangladesh to obtain a comprehensive Partition narrative.[49] This paper suggests that serious and methodical scholarships as well as creative expressions through media such as cinema should include the stories of both Hindus and Muslims to provide a comprehensive contribution from East Bengal/Bangladesh.

Notes

1 Shelley Feldman, "Feminist Interruptions: The Silence of East Bengal in the Story of Partition," *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 1, no. 2 (1999): 168.
2 Dina M. Siddiqi, "Left Behind by the Nation: 'Stranded Pakistanis' in Bangladesh," *SITES: New Series* 1, no. 1 (2013): 156.
3 Anindya Raychaudhuri, *Narrating South Asian Partition: Oral History, Literature, Cinema* (New York: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2019).
4 Sayeed Ferdous, "'Surgery' in Rush and Affected Lives," *The Journal of Social Studies*, no. 146 (2015): 25-44.
5 Urvashi Butalia, *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1998), 3.
6 Bhaskar Sarkar, *Mourning the Nation: Indian Cinema in the Wake of Partition* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 1.
7 See Jaya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932-1947* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994) and Anindya Raychaudhuri, *Narrating South Asian Partition*.
8 See Jaya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided*.
9 See Mohammad Shah, "Social and Cultural Basis of Bengali Nationalism," in *History of Bangladesh: 1704-1971* (Vol. 3 [Social and Cultural History]) ed. Sirajul Islam (Dhaka: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, 1993), 691-734.
10 Sadia Toor, *The State of Islam: Culture and Cold War Politics in Pakistan* (London: Pluto Press, 2011), 25.
11 A. F. Salahuddin Ahmed, *Bengali Nationalism and the Emergence of Bangladesh: An Introductory Outline* (Dhaka: ICBS, 1994), 18.
12 Shelley Feldman, "Feminist Interruptions," 170.
13 Feldman, "Feminist Interruptions," 173.
14 Four principles of the Bangladesh constitution are nationalism, socialism, democracy, and secularism. In the constitution, nationalism was essentially considered Bengali nationalism.
15 See Fahmidul Haq, "National Identity and Cinematic Representation: Independent Films in Bangladesh," in *South Asian Filmscapes: Transregional Encounters*, eds. Elora Halim Chowdhury and Esha Niyogi De (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2020), 25-42.
16 See Shelley Feldman, "Feminist Interruptions."
17 Feldman, "Feminist Interruptions," 169.
18 Feldman, "Feminist Interruptions," 169
19 Feldman, "Feminist Interruptions," 169
20 Sayeed Ferdous, "'Surgery' in Rush," 146.
21 Ferdous, "'Surgery' in Rush," 25-44.
22 See Ananya Jahanara Kabir, *Partition's Post-Amnesias* (Dhaka: The University Press Limited, 2014).
23 See Sayeed Ferdous, "Partition Prolonging along the Bengal Borderlands," *Partition Studies Quarterly* (2021), https://partitionstudiesquarterly.org/article/partition-prolonging-along-the-bengal-borderlands/ (accessed on June 8, 2021).
24 See Zamindar, V. F., *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).
25 See Sayeed Ferdous, "Partition Prolonging along the Bengal Borderlands."
26 See Bhaskar Sarkar, 2009.
27 Bhaskar Sarkar, 201.

28 See Sugata Sinha, "Ritwik Ghatak and Bengali Identity," *Jamini* 5, no. 1 (2009): 19-23.
29 See Fahmida Akhter, "Zahir Raihan's *Stop Genocide* (1971): A Dialectic Cinematic Message to the World," in *South Asian Filmscapes: Transregional Encounters*, eds. Elora Halim Chowdhury and Esha Niyogi De (Seattle: University of Washington Press 2020), 233-249.
30 See Mohaiemen, Naeem, "Simulation at Wars' End: A 'Documentary' in the Field of Evidence Quest." *Bioscope* 7, no. 1 (2016): 31–57.
31 Mohaiemen, "Simulation at Wars' End."
32 *Birangona*s were women subjected to sexual and physical violence during the LW in Bangladesh in 1971 and later declared as "war heroines" (for detail, see Nayanika Mookherjee, *The Spectral Wound: Sexual Violence, Public Memories and the Bangladesh War of 1971* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).
33 Tareque Masud in Fahmidul Haq and Pronab Bhowmik, *Tareque Masud, Jatiotabad O Cholochchitro* (Tareque Masud, Nationalism and Cinema) (Dhaka: Agami, 2014), 112.
34 See Ananya Jahanara Kabir, *Partition's Post-Amnesias*.
35 This numbers are calculated by updating the numbers denoted by Anupam Hayat (See Anupam Hayat, *Bangladesher Muktizuddhovittik Cholochchitro* [Films on Liberation War of Bangladesh], (Dhaka: Bangladesh Film Archive, 2011).
36 Personal interview with Tanvir Mokammel for this paper.
37 Personal interview with Tanvir Mokammel for this paper.
38 Dina M. Siddiqi, "Left Behind by the Nation," 156.
39 Siddiqi, "Left Behind."
40 On May 10, 2014, while distributing the National Film Award 2012, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina called upon Bangladeshi filmmakers to project the great achievements of the 1971 LW and the history of sacrifices of the people through movies (See *Dhaka Tribune*, May 11, 2014).
41 See '20 films to receive government grants for 2020-21' at https://www.thedailystar.net/arts-entertainment/news/20-films-receive-government-grants-2020-21-2111669 (accessed on July 29, 2021).
42 See note 36 above.
43 See note 36 above.
44 Fahmidul Haq, "National Identity and Cinematic Representation," 36.
45 Kaberi Gayen, "Women, War and Cinema: Construction of Women in the Liberation War Films of Bangladesh," *French Journal for Media Research* (2015), https://frenchjournalformediaresearch.com/lodel-1.0/main/index.php?id=478, (accessed on July 29, 2021).
46 See Sayeed Ferdous, *1947-er Banglavag: Varokendrokotar Poropare* (Partition of Bengal in 1947: Beyond Indo-centrism), 10th Monthly General Meeting: Council 2018 and 2019 (Dhaka: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh).
47 See note 16 above.
48 See note 25 above.
49 See note 16 above.

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1947, 1971: history, facts, and fictions

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ABSTRACT

After 24 years of the partition, the new neighboring country, Bangladesh, was born in 1971 in the Eastern region of India. The division of India and the birth of Bangladesh are, apparently, two unconnected events standing at two different times. However, researchers have found the incidents deeply interlinked. Kabir described partition not as an "event" but as an "ongoing process" while Zamindar termed this catastrophic event "a long partition" as the making of Pakistan and India involves years of social, political, and bureaucratic efforts. One of the main queries of this study is to find how partition is portrayed in Bangladeshi fictions. Do the fictions recognize the Liberation War of Bangladesh as an extension of the partition? In search of answers, the study inspects 12 Bengali novels focusing on partition and the Liberation War. This study is guided by the concept of "long partition" and the "Trauma theory" while it also takes Kabir's theoretical proposition "Post-amnesia" into account.

Introduction: narratives within narratives

The three South Asian countries – India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh – are tied not only politically but culturally as they shared the same womb – the Indus Valley civilization. Bangladesh, the then East Pakistan, divorced Pakistan in 1971 as the repressive central government had been disappointing people of this province since the birth of the country in 1947.[1] Khan marks that "being part of Pakistan, which was created on the two-nation theory, gave little scope for the Bengalis to live and flourish."[2] According to him, Bengalis were treated as "second class citizens" by the central government in West Pakistan.[3] The central government refused to recognize Bengali language as official languages which triggered the struggle against Pakistani domination since then."[4] The splitting of East and West Pakistan was not smooth. Pakistani military crackdown "Operation Searchlight" starts on 25 March and that was "the beginning of civil war."[5] Bengalis fought a nine-month-long war as the Pakistani military occupied the land and killed millions. Birth of Bangladesh, as Dubey pointed out, was "marked by extreme violence, rape, genocide and acts of gross human rights violations by the West Pakistani Army and its auxiliary forces both against Bengali Freedom Fighters and civilians."[6] Kiernan compared the

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atrocity, violence, and genocide done by the Pakistani Army with the atrocity of Vietnam War[7] while Dubey compared both the events – the partition and the Liberation War – with the Holocaust.[8]

Literature shows that those who were murdered in 1971 were mainly Hindus who were targeted due to their religion and Bengali people who demanded autonomy and preferred "Bengaliness" over "Muslim" or "Pakistani" identity.[9] A New York Times report published in July 1971 writes, "the Pakistani Army has painted big yellow "H's" on the Hindu shops still standing in this town to identify the property of the minority."[10] This was the scenario of a small town named Faridpur which was 85 miles away from the than East Pakistan's capital, Dhaka.[11] This report writes, "an undetermined number of Faridpur's 10,000 Hindus have been killed and others have fled across the border to predominantly Hindu India."[12] Anthony Mascarenhas's groundbreaking report "Genocide" was published in June 1971 which "exposed the brutality of Pakistan's suppression of the Bangladeshi uprising."[13] A portion of the report tells about a man named Abdul Bari who was in rush to reach home before the curfew.[14] While heading home, Bari was caught by two Pakistani *jawans* who questioned, "Who are you?'[15] Frightened Bari replied, "Mercy, Sahib! My name is Abdul Bari. I'm a tailor."[16] However, the jawans terrorized the tailor with more questions: "Don't lie to me. You're a Hindu."[17] "Before the man could answer," as Maskarenhas writes, "he was quickly frisked for weapons by a jawan while another quickly snatched away his lungi. The skinny body that was bare revealed the distinctive traces of circumcision, which is obligatory for Muslims."[18] A Dhaka Tribune report writes "The massacre of the Hindus – murders, rape, arson and looting – was carried out systematically across the country until the end of the war."[19] Samad labeled the Pakistani army as "the Islamic militia of Pakistan."[20]

In addition to that, sexual violence against women was used as weapon of war.[21] Bangladesh Liberation War Museum stated on its website that at least 200,000 women were raped during the war.[22] Researchers argue that the actual number of sexually abused women is much higher than this. According to Brownmiller, the number of raped women – including "Girls of eight to grandmothers of seventy-five" – could be up to 400,000.[23] "Pakistani soldiers had not only violated Bengali women on the spot," as Brownmiller pointed out, "they abducted tens of hundreds and held them by force in their military barracks for nightly use."[24] A New York Times report published on October 14, 1971 writes, "Many Dacca residents, including foreigners, tell of having seen young women taken away by military policemen."[25] The report also stated that "women picked up by the army in March and April and held in military brothels are not being released because they are pregnant beyond the point at which abortions are possible."[26]

In 1947, while millions in colonial India had been yearning for *Azadi* – freedom – from British rule, Muslim League leader Mohammed Ali Jinnah kept his staunch position in demanding a separate country for Indian Muslims.[27] Dalrymple mentioned Jinnah as "the man most responsible for the creation of Pakistan."[28] Also, the Pakistan government's website gives the full credit to Jinnah for the creation of Pakistan.[29] Referring the Lahore Resolution, the website writes, "Jinnah's Lahore address lowered the final curtain on any prospects for a single united independent India."[30] The site adds "the rest of the world would take at least seven years to appreciate that he literally meant every word that he had uttered that important afternoon in March" in 1940.[31] Two nation theory was officially introduced at the political event on this afternoon.

Zaman referring the novel *Ragna Prabhat*, writes the cost of freedom from British colonial rulers was high as the country was not only liberated, but "at the same time it has also been partitioned."[32] The partition was costly for millions of individuals as they had to endure physical and psychological pain and trauma. Butalia shows though the British were gone, the countries were born, new identities were created, the wound and trauma stayed forever in individuals, and their lives were shaped by the memories of murder, violence, and loss.[33] To understand the multilayered effects of such a large historical event, scholars need to excavate individual and collective memory.[34] Through psychoanalysis, researchers dig out many fictional characters to learn how trauma affects individual psyche and shapes their lives. Jeffery C. Alexander who works on trauma writes "The cultural construction of collective trauma is fueled by individual experiences of pain and suffering, but it is the threat to collective rather than individual identity that defines the suffering at stake.[35] By using Freud's psychoanalysis theory, Caruth examined a couple of fictional characters from different texts – novels, poems – and exposed how trauma shapes different character's life.[36] However, as far as known, in Bangladesh a few studies are there in film discipline.

In Bangladeshi popular narratives, the history of Liberation War is political leader-centric while contribution and perspective mass people are obliterated.[37] Quoting economist Rehman Sobhan, the Daily Star writes "Bangladesh has failed to honour the blood debt to the common people who paid the real price for independence."[38] Butalia observes people who had no relations with politics were the actual "bearer of the burden" of the partition in 1947 as their lives were toppled by the decisions made by the leaders.[39] Before the partition, the eastern part of Bengal was named East Bengal. Roy notes East Bengal formally changed its name to East Pakistan in 1956,[40] and by divorcing Pakistan it renamed itself Bangladesh in 1971.

Zaman notes, the partition literature is obtainable in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh in all the major languages – Hindi, Bengali, Urdu, Punjabi, and English.[41] Saadat Hasan Manto, Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Khushwant Singh, Bapsi Sidhwa, Anita Desai, Krishan Chander, Kurratul Hyder, Shah Nawaz

and Sunil Gangopadhyay, Hasan Aizizul Huq are the towering figures who worked on the partition in various literary forms. *Train to Pakistan, Ice Candy Man, Midnight's Children, Clear Light of the Day, Sun Light on a Broken Column, Freedom at Mightnight, Zulmat-e-Neem Roz* and *Pinjar* are a few of the literary works to be mentioned. *Khol Do, Thanda Gohst, Toba Tek Singh* are a few of Manto's short stories that portrayed partition. The Guardian labeled Manto "as the greatest chronicler of this most savage episode in the region's history."[42]

There are two sides of partition literature. Partition is viewed either as "*batwara*" or as "*azaadi*."[43] On the one side, there are writers "who had written with joyous abandon on the coming *azaadi* all through the 1940s adopted a taciturn silence."[44] On the other side, there are writers who focused on the "horrors of partition," dealt with "individual suffering, loss and pain."[45] Zaman writes, "according to progressives, Partition was a mistake and Hindus and Muslims should have stuck together."[46]

A great number of Partition literature – novels, short stories, autobiographies – are found in Bengali. Yet scholars have observed that literature found in Bengali mostly reflects the perspective of the West Bengal writers. Ferdous identifies Partition studies as "*Indo-centric*."[47] Scholars detect that Bangladeshi perspective is absent in partition literature. But does this absence mean there is no Bangladeshi perspective at all? Or is this an elided chapter? There are two answers to this question. According to popular Bangladeshi perspective, the partition of 1947 was overshadowed by the genocide and violence committed by the Pakistani Army during the liberation war in 1971. However, Zaman observes that Bangladeshi perspective is missing in the partition discourses because "Bengali novels have not been translated into English."[48] Therefore, this study intends to fill the gap by bringing the Bangladeshi voice to the surface.

Apparently, the partition and the liberation war are two unconnected events. However, Kabir found the events "profoundly interrelated" as she described the partition not as an "event" but as an "ongoing process."[49] Harrington notes, "Liberation War of 1971 has sat uneasily at the edge of Partition Studies for many years" and strongly recommended that they be "regarded as a not unconnected event."[50]

A piece of cloth with embroidery has two sides – the neatly organized outer side and the chaotically jumbled inner side or underside. Like a piece of embroidery, partition history, too, has an underside. One of the central concerns of this study is to find how the Bangladeshi literature represent the partition. Does literature portray the Liberation War of Bangladesh as the extension of the partition of India? In quest of answers, this study excavates the collective memory of Bangladeshi people by examining 12 Bengali novels as literature is highly regarded as the archive of shared memory. Das and Das marks, "novels had a deep internal relation to historical work, for they tried to spell, as much as serious history sought to do, a self-respecting relation with the community's past."[51] Among the 12 novels, five are themed on the partition and seven are themed on the Liberation

War. The rationality of taking more books on Liberation War is the actual published works are way much higher than the novels focusing the Partition. The 12 novels were published in-between 1957 to 2010.

Bad old days vs good old days: the Beginning of Antagonism between Hindus and Muslims

The nameless village woman who is the main character in *Agunpakhi* – a Bangladeshi novel set in the last decades of colonial India – become petrified over the growing communal violence during the partition and got stuck in her recurrent thought of "the good old days" when Hindus and Muslims lived together in peace.[52] Zaman observes there are novels from both the sides of Bengal – West and East – themed on the partition where writers showed romantic relationships between Hindu and Muslim males and females as the symbol of communal harmony in the pre-partition era.[53] She notes, many Bengali novels represented the partition as a blade that parted the thread of communal harmony.

Bir Bahadur Sing, a Punjabi man who was interviewed by Butalia decades after the partition, believes the seed of the partition was deeply buried in the society.[54] Thus, his account differs from the idea of "the good old days":

> If a Musalmaan was coming along the road, and we shook hands with him, and we had, say, a box of food or something in our hand, that would then become soiled and we could not eat it; if we are holding a dog in one hand and food in the other, there is nothing wrong with that food. But if a Musalmaan would come and shake hands our dadis and mothers would say, son, don't eat this food, it has become polluted. [. . .]. How can it be? [. . .] This is really terrible. And this is the reason Pakistan was made.[55]

Butalia stated "the seeds of the idea of partition can be said to have lain within the economic and social differences that existed between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims."[56] Many Muslim characters represented in Bangladeshi novels believed the "bad old days" – days under the dominance of Hindus – are over with the creation of Pakistan to usher in a new dawn for Islamic nationalism and socio-economic emancipation.[57] Popular discourse blames the British for cultivating animosity between Hindus and Muslims as part of their "Divide and Rule" policy. Tharoor writes, "the creation and perpetuation of Hindu-Muslim antagonism was the most significant accomplishment of British imperial policy: the colonial project of "divide et impera" (divide and rule) fomented religious antagonisms to facilitate continued imperial rule."[58] However, doubting this established narrative, unconvinced mind may ask, was it the British who enfeebled the communal tie, or was the Indian society already divided long before the arrival of the British?

Murshid writes, Muslim rulers entered Bengal in the thirteenth century.[59] Defeating the ruler Laxman Sena, Turkish military general Muhammad Bin Bakhtiar Khilji conquered Bengal in 1204. However, Sen identifies that long

before Khilji's decisive win in Bengal, Muslim rulers had been trying to conquer India for many years.[60] Eaton notes, a handful Muslims used to live in Bengal for business purposes before Khilji's invasion.[61] According to him, long-distance Arabian-Persian merchants initially started living in the region's south-east part during 825–1035 AD.[62] Muslims first invaded the western part of India in the eighth century. The naval port Debal played a key role in the Muslim conquest of India as Arabian traders used to use this particular sea route to reach the Indian coast. Evidence shows Arabian traders were attracted by Indian spices as it was the money-making product. Spices were vital for Arabian commerce as European buyers were dependent on them. Sen notes Arabian merchants and Europeans initially came for spices and gradually got entangled in Indian socio-politics for their sake of business.[63]

History suggests a dispute started between the ruler of Sindh King Dahir and Governor of Iraq Hajjaj Bin Yusuf as the latter's ship was robbed while docked at Debal port at night.[64] The aggrieved governor, planned to conquer Sindh as the port was needed for commerce. In 712 AD, general Muhammad Bin Qasim won the Sindh and since then Sindh and Multan was ruled by them.[65] After Qasim, Sultan of Gazni, as Marx points out, "Mahmud's first invasion of India" started with Lahore in 1001 AD.[66] According to Marx, Mahmud's 12th invasion of India was in 1024 AD while he attacked Gujrat and Somnath. During the invasion, Mahmud, as pointed by Marx, "marched from Ghazni to Multan, then across the Sind Desert to Gujrat, took the capital, Anhalwar, on his way devastated the territories of the Rajas of Ajmer, then captured the temple of Somnath."[67]

However, historians observe, despite their several attempts Muslim ruler could not penetrate further into India until the end of twelfth century. Afghan ruler Muhammad Ghori alias Shehabuddin penetrated India in 1192. Marx notes, "Shehab invaded India again, defeated Raja Prithwi, killed him, left Kutubuddin, an ennobled slave, as governor of Ajmer. The latter captured Delhi, remained there as governor, and later proclaimed himself independent, becoming the first Mohammedan king of Delhi."[68] Thus, Muslims continued expanding in India. The Delhi Sultanate continued to rule India until 1526.[69] In 1526, Babar founded the Mughal Empire that continued until the first independence war of India which is commonly known as Sepoy mutiny in 1857.

Like Aibak, the first Muslim conqueror of Bengal Bakhtiyar Khalji were also a Ghurid commander. The fall of Raja Dahir in Sind in 712 in western part, the defeat of Prithwi in northern India in 1192, and the defeat of Laxman Sena in Eastern part of India in 1204 were pivotal for the rise of Islam in India. Eaton marks, with the defeat of Sena ruler, the influence of Islam in political, social, and cultural frontiers continued to rise in Bengal.[70] He notes that before Khalji's invasion, Bengal was mainly a land of Hindu and Buddhists with diverse indigenous inhabitants.[71]

Roy observes the name *Banga* was first mentioned in a Hindu scripture name *Aiterya Aranyaka*, and the book described the inhabitants of this land as non-Aryan who had been living there before Aryans' arrival.[72] He writes, one of the earliest mentions of Bengal was found in the great epic *Mahabharat*.[73] Historians note that Bengal was an agrarian society with a rich heritage. Eaton blamed Brahmanism for the exclusion-prone hierarchical Indian society that was dogmatically concerned about rituals and purity.[74] Because of the cast and hierarchical rigidity, Buddhism rose in India through the Mauryan Empire until the Pala dynasty.

In comparison to the thousands of years of prevailing Hindu and Buddhist culture of Bengal, Islam was a completely foreign concept. Kumar notes Islam was introduced in Bengal while Arabians came for commerce during the Buddhist Pala Empire.[75] So, fathoming the idea of "the good old days" VS "the Bad old days"[76] is not possible without understanding the social psyche of Bengal. On the one hand, predominantly Hindu society was exclusion-prone and divided among themselves due to the caste system.[77] On the other hand, Muslim invaders used dogmatic terms "Islam" and "Infidelity" (Kufr)."[78] Eaton marks, the terms "Islam" and "Infidelity" as used in these sources simply refer to the rulers and the ruled – that is, Persianized Turks who were assumed to be Muslim, and Bengali subjects who were assumed to be non-Muslim.[79] He also observes, these exclusions from both the parties – Muslim rulers and non-Muslim ruled – continued for centuries. According to him, "since large numbers of Bengali Muslim did not emerge until well after the conquest was completed, for the first several centuries after Muhammad Bakhtiyar's invasion, the political and cultural frontiers remained quite distinct geographically."[80]

In this background, the British East India Company took power from Muslim rulers in the eighteenth century and continued British conquest in India. For the first time in history, Muslims and Hindus had a common enemy. Soldiers from both of these communities revolted together against the British in 1857.[81] From then on, anti-British sentiment and Indian nationalism were sharply on the rise. Many believed the Indian nationalist movement was not always secular.[82] Chatterji identifies, national identity was often associated with Hinduism during the rise of Indian Nationalism.[83] She stresses that the trend was predominantly noticeable in Bengal.[84]

It needs to be mentioned that the partition of 1947 was the second partition of Bengal as it was first divided in 1905. The first partition was annulled in 1911 because of the strong protest from West Bengal's intelligentsia and political leaders whom, Chatterji described as 'bhadralok or "respectable people."[85] However, the Muslims of East Bengal were dissatisfied with the reunification as they saw the partition of Bengal as an opportunity for their economic prosperity. "The Muslims of Bengal," as Chatterji points out, "shunned the movements led by the bhadralok."[86]

During the rise of Indian Nationalism, writers including prominent novelist Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay was criticized for promoting Hindu communalism.[87] Bankim's novel *Ananda Math* was accused of encouraging Hindu extremism.[88] Das and Das write, "perhaps for the first time in Bengali literature Bankim converted a neutral territory, a profane space into a sacred ground of a community" as he used the image of the virulent goddess from the Hindu tradition.[89] They also noted that a few novels of him such as *Rajsingh, Anandamath* and *Sitaram* "became totally concerned with issues of Hindu empowerment through defeating the Muslim."[90] Bankim in his writings, as Das and Das pointed out, focused on "cultural difference" and portrayed "the Hindu as the 'self' while the Muslim was 'cultural difference" as the "other."[91]

Communalism was also on the rise in East Bengal.[92] On the basis of the Lahore resolution, the two-nation theory was introduced in 1940. *Larke lenge Pakistan* – we will fight to create Pakistan – slogan was heard even in the far corner of the country.[93] The mayhem of "Direct Action Day" in 1946 propelled the partition. Ahmed writes, Bengali politicians Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, Sarat Bose and Abul Hashim demanded United Bengal.[94] Yet their efforts went in vain as top leaders of Congress, Muslim League, and Hindu Mahasabha did not support the concept.[95] So, in 1947, Bengal, too, was divided.

History marks the partition of India as a catastrophic event and one of the biggest convulsions of the twentieth century. Zamindar notes, during the partition, 20 Million people were displaced.[96] Butalia writes communal violence killed up to two million, and about 75 thousand women were abducted and raped at that time.[97] Violence breeds violence.[98] The communal violence, as Khan pointed out, was "unimaginable" and 'had escalated to the point of ethnic cleansing'[99] as 'Nayar marks how communal attack was made by crying *Allah ho Akbar, Ya Ali, Pakistan Zindabad*, and *Bharat Mata ki Jai*.[100] During the partition, people took perilous journeys, traveling hundreds of miles even on foot to reach the safe side.[101] Nayar, an eyewitness of the partition, writes "we didn't wish to uproot ourselves."[102] However, he too was forced to travel to India from Pakistan.

Researchers show that many people who reached the safe side had suffered from trauma for the rest of their lives as they went through horrific experiences.[103] Caruth, by applying Freudian psychoanalysis, explained how devastated a traumatized person's inner world could be.[104] She writes "the ways in which texts of a certain period – the texts of psychoanalysis, of literature, and of literary theory – both speak about and speak through the profound story of traumatic experience. "[105]

Officially, partition was done in 1947 but Zamindar argued, the process of partition continued for years as people from both the countries moved to the other side.[106] Zamindar labeled this process as 'long partition'[107] and argued that the partition was not only marked with killing and riot, but "bureaucratic

violence" worsened sufferings.[108] This study is guided by the concept of "long partition" and the "Trauma theory." The study also takes Kabir's theoretical proposition "Post-amnesia" into account where she focused on the trans-generational selective remembering and forgetting of the partition history.[109] This study examines the underside of the partition history from the perspective of Bangladesh, and also asks the following research questions:

RQ-1: What was the impact of the partition on the protagonists and other characters of the selected novels?

RQ-2: How do the characters comprehend/describe the partition of India?

RQ-3: What was the impact of the liberation war on the characters?

RQ-4: How do the characters comprehend the liberation war of Bangladesh? Do they perceive it as the continuation of the partition?

Method

This qualitative research analyzed 12 novels themed on the partition and the liberation war. The study examined how the two catastrophic events shaped the fictional characters' emotions and impacted their lives.

Novel Inclusion-Exclusion Criteria: This study examined 12 novels – five themed on the partition and seven themed on the liberation war – and used the purposive sampling method. The sample size from the category of 1947 is smaller than the category of 1971 because, in reality, the novels focusing on partition are fewer than the novels themed on the liberation war. This study includes only the novels where the partition and the Liberation War came as a central theme. So, a novel consisting of these two incidents as sub-themes were excluded. Popular and widely read novels were prioritized in sample selection criteria. Also, there are writers who wrote novels on both themes. In this case, the most known work was chosen as the study was guided by the policy of taking only one book from any author.

The list of the books on the partition includes *Ranga Probhat* [The Bright Dawn] by Abul Fazl (1957), *Khelaram Khele Jaa* [Thou Actor! Keep Acting] by Syed Shamsul Haque (1973), *Kalo Borof* [The Black Ice] by Mahmudul Haque (1992), *Agunpakhi* [The Firebird] by Hasan Azizul Huq (2006) and *Echamoteer Epar-Opar* [On the Bank of River Echamotee] by Abdul Mannan Syed (2010). The books themed on the liberation war includes *Rifle Roti Aurat* [Rifel, Bread, Women] by Anwar Pasha (1973), *Hangor Nodi Grenade* [Shark River Grenade] by Selina Hossain (1976), *Aguner Poroshmoni* [Touchstone of Fire] by Humayun Ahmed (1984), *Jibon*

O Rajnaitik Bastobota [Life and Political Reality] by Shahidul Zahir (1988), *Alatchokro* [Circle of Fire] by Ahmed Sofa (1993), *Maa* [Freedom's Mother] by Anisul Hoque (2003), and *Talash* [The Search] by Shaheen Akhtar (2004).

Discussion: melancholic Freedom, Misogynist History

After examining the novels, it was found that some themes such as quest for identity, violence, killing, rape of women, and refugee crisis were common in both the events – the Partition and the Liberation War. Repeated reading of the texts helped to categorize the themes into sub-themes accordingly. The findings of the themes and sub themes are presented in the Table 1:

Detachment and Alienation

On the basis of the Two Nation Theory, India was partitioned into two. But the study found many fictional Muslim characters who denied leaving India as it was their motherland. Similar emotion was found in many Hindus who refused to move to India as their ancestral homestead was in *Purba Bangla* – East Bengal. In addition to that, there are many characters – portrayed as citizens of East Pakistan – who feel disconnected and alienated from West Pakistan. Three sub-themes – Rootlessness, detachment from India and newly created Pakistan, and detachment from West Pakistan – are found in this category.

Regardless of age, gender, education, and economic class, the element "rootlessness" was found in many characters. The novel *Kalo Borof* reveals the story of a private college teacher's emotional fragility who moved to East Bengal in his childhood with his parents after the partition. The story is presented in a non-linear manner. It takes a while to understand that *Poka*,

Table 1. Themes and sub-themes associated with the partition literature in Bangladeshi novels are presented below.

Theme	Sub-theme
Detachment and Alienation	Rootlessness
	Detachment from India and newly created Pakistan
	Detachment from West Pakistan
Violence	Depiction of Violence in novels focusing on the partition
	Depiction of Violence in novels focusing liberation war
Torture and rape of women	Depiction of torture and rape of women in novels focusing on the partition
	Depiction of torture and rape of women in novels focusing Liberation War
Escaping the ordeal	Refugee issue in novels themed partition
	Refugee issue in novels themed Liberation War
Pain, Trauma and Nostalgia	Trauma
	Grief
	Emptiness and Longing
Continuation of partition	Hatred toward Bengali language
	Hatred toward Hindu and Bengali people
	Hatred toward Bengali culture
	Quest for identity

an adolescent boy who was happy in his ancestral home in West Bengal, is none but the middle-aged college teacher – Abdul Khalek – himself. The novel portrayed Khalek as a nostalgic, unhappy, and melancholic person whose world was shattered when he was a kid by the partition, and since then, every now and then, he has been drifting in his memory. The study found rootlessness, a recurrent feeling in him. He revisits the memory of leaving their home and identifies the partition as the point of "*Taar Chhirhe gelo*" – when the thread was torn apart.[110] After the fateful event, *Poka*'s inner world trembled and he never found the ground settled due to his psychological tremor.

Like Khalek, Babar in *Khelaram Khele Jaa*[111] and Montu's grandfather in *Echamoteer Epar-Opar*[112] feel rootlessness. The protagonist of *Khelaram Khele Jaa* Babar experienced a violent riot in West Bengal in his childhood. After the partition, he moved to East Pakistan, and became a successful businessman and a reputed TV presenter. Yet deep down in his heart Babar always felt detached from everything and everyone related to his present world.[113] Rootlessness was mostly found in the novels themed on the partition while it was found only in one novel themed on the liberation war. In *Alatchakro* the main character Daniyel was a refugee in Kolkata who fled from Bangladesh during the war. Displaced Daniyel felt alienated, uprooted, and expressed his vulnerability every now and then in the novel.[114]

Detachment from India and newly created Pakistan is another sub-theme in this category. Novels represented people who moved toward the other side of the border as they found their side perfidious and unsafe. When folks were fleeing the chaos leaving everything behind, some people identified themselves inseparable from their '*bhita*'[115] – ancestral homestead – and '*Nijer Desh*'[116] – own country. In *Ranga Probhat* the Hindu man Charubabu, one day, while having family time, was discussing riots and refugee issues as Hindu neighbors, relatives and colleagues had been fleeing from East Bengal, stated that he will not leave his country. He added that "*morte hoy nijer deshe morbo*" – if I have to die, I will die right here in my own country.[117] Charubabu, being a Hindu refused to move to Hindustan – India – as he feels disassociated with India because it was not his "*desh*" while the main character in *Agunpakhi*, a Muslim women, vehemently denied moving to East Pakistan as she identified Pakistan as '*Bhindesh*'[118] – a foreign land.

Detachment from West Pakistan is the last sub-theme in this category. After the partition Pakistan was "composed of two wings a thousand miles apart."[119] Two wings – East and West – of Pakistan were not only separated by geographical distance but "ethnically, linguistically, culturally different from each other."[120] Azad, one of the main characters in *Maa*, was a Bengali student who went to Karachi to pursue higher study. In his everyday life Azad felt cornered and alienated due to stark differences in language, food habits, and

cultural beliefs between East and West Pakistan.[121] From the living experience, he learned that West Pakistani people disrespect Bengalis, and they even barely consider Bengali Muslims as Muslims.

Azad sent letters to his mother in Dhaka where he narrates his longing for "*Bangla Bhasha*" – Bengali language – and "*Bhat*" – boiled rice – as no one in Karachi understands Bangla and none eats rice. In the letters he mentioned, "*Bangaali aamra aarek Jati*" – we Bengali people are a separate nation and stated that "*Musalman holei jati ek hoy na*" – only Islam cannot bind us all as a nation.[122] Like Azad, many characters illustrated in novels themed on the Liberation War had similar feelings about Pakistan. *Buri*, the protagonist of novel *Hangor Nodi Grenade*, was an illiterate village woman who sacrificed her son to save two freedom fighters who described the Pakistani army as "*Bhindeshi*" – foreigners.[123] Sudeepto Shaheen, the main character in *Rifle Roti Aorat* who was a Dhaka University's teacher, also felt the same way as Buri.[124] Buri and Sudeepto represent two different socio-political classes, but both of them equally dislike West Pakistan's supremacy and dominance.

Violence

Depiction of violence, killing, and atrocities are intense in the Liberation War novels while it is mild in the partition novels. Although history suggests after the Calcutta killings in August in 1946 in West Bengal, Noakhali became the epicenter of the communal riots in East Bengal.[125] Goswami writes, Noakhali riot starts on October 10, 1946.[126] During the riot, as researchers pointed, thousands of Hindus were killed by Muslim attackers while thousands of women were raped and abducted.[127] In addition to that many thousands were displaced and took refuge in temporary relief camps. Following the Noakhali riot, several other attacks took place in East Bengal.[128] Witnessing the horror of the riot, Mahatma Gandhi came to Noakhali and stayed a couple of months to restore communal peace and harmony.[129]

In the novel *Ranga Probhat*, the Hindu character Charubabu who refused to leave his "*desh*" was killed during the mayhem of partition. After his death Charu's family moved to Kolkata. Apart from this killing, the novel also briefly illustrates a Kolkata riot that took place on a Muharram day.[130] *Khelaram Khele Jaa* depicts another riot that took place in West Bengal. The protagonist Babar experienced violence in a riot while he was returning home from a village fair with his younger sister Hasnu. A rioter with a blood-stained machete abducted the little Hasnu. Horrified young Babar could not do anything to save his sister but ran frantically while in the background Hasnu was crying for help.[131] Some other details of communal violence were found in *Agunpakhi*.[132] Burning houses, looting, killing, abducting, and raping women were briefly presented in the partition literature.

However, the depiction of Violence in novels focusing on the Liberation War is vivid. *Rifle Roti Aorat* [Rifle Bread Women] is the first novel on the liberation war. The writer Anwar Pasha, a Dhaka University teacher, was martyred in the war. *Rifle Roti Aorat* is loaded with violence. The book starts with the protagonist, a displaced Dhaka University teacher *Shudeepto Shahin* who took a temporary refuge in one of his friends' house in Dhaka as his residence at the university campus was massacred by operation searchlight – a military crackdown began on 25th March in 1971.[133] The novel painted the killing, looting, burning houses, raping, and kidnapping of women vividly. Many characters in the novel were based on true facts. The novel *Jeebon O Rajnoitik Bastobota* – Life and Political Reality – also portrayed violence. Bodu Mollah, a *razakar* – collaborator who helped the Pakistani Army during the liberation war – was involved in killing Bengalis and Hindus in *Lokkhi Bazar*, a predominantly Hindu residential area in the old town of Dhaka. Inhabitants of the area were petrified by Bodu's cruelty and violence. During wartime, Bodu's neighbors noticed him feeding crows on his roof. But gradually everyone learned that Bodu feeds human flesh to crows. One day, while Bodu was feeding the crows, a piece of flesh dropped on the neighbor Khaja Ahmed Ali's roof. Ali identified the flesh as a small piece of a mutilated female breast. Other day, another piece of flesh dropped in a cooking pot kept in the water well in another neighbor Jamir Bepari's yard. Jamir's wife identified the piece of flash as a part of a penis.[134] Along with the two aforesaid novels violence was represented in *Talaash, Hangor Nodi Grenade, Maa* and Aguner Poroshmoni as well.

Torture and rape of women

Navarro-Tejero writes, during the partition when communal violence unleashed women suffered the "dehumanizing sexual violence."[135] She also marks, "women's bodies were abducted, stripped naked, raped, mutilated (their breasts cut off), carved with religious symbols and murdered to be sent in train wagons to the 'other' side of the border."[136] Butalia notes women's sufferings were underreported in the partition history. This study also found the same thing.[137] However, the research found that the depiction of torture and rape of women is underrepresented in Bangladeshi partition literature while it is abundant in the novels focusing the Liberation War.

Bangladeshi Bengali partition novels – at least the five novels that were scrutinized during the study – did not depict the rape and torture of women. *Khelaram Khele Jaa* gives a reference of a little girl *Hasnu* who was abducted in a riot but did not illustrate the details.[138] Another novel *Echhamoteer Epar-Opar* referred to a father who moved to East Bengal during the partition as his daughter was sexually abused. But there is no detail about the incident.[139]

Depiction of torture and rape of women in the novels focusing on the Liberation War is abundant. The incidents of rape and torture of women were found in every novel, but *Rifle Roti Aorat, Jeebon O Rajnoitik Bastobota*, and *Talaash* are loaded with rape and torture stories. *Momena*, one of the main characters in *Jeebon O Rajnoitik Bastobota*, was abducted by collaborators and found dead in an empty sand-bed beside the river Buriganga four days after the abduction. Her younger brother, Abdul Majid, discovered the body. One of her breasts was cut off from the body. Her body from the abdominal area to thigh bore marks of gashes while her right thigh from waist to knee was shredded with a vertical cut and left open like a sliced watermelon. Her body lied faced up while the hands, pressed under the body, tied together at the back.[140] This is one of the illustrations from many stories of rape and torture depicted in the novels.

The discussion of this portion cannot be completed without mentioning the novel *Talash* – The Search. *Talash* portrayed a woman, Maurium alias Merry, as the main character. The novel does not bring the perspective of heroism. Rather, it narrates how the nation forgets its war heroines and wipe their history away. Women who were raped and tortured by the Pakistani army in 1971 were kept in the dark in the liberated country while the male freedom fighters were worshipped as heroes. Mutki, one of the main characters, learned that many *Birangona* – war heroine – had to choose prostitution to make their living as they were abandoned by their families and state.[141] The writer shows Maurium experienced rape not only by occupying militaries during the war but in the time of peace in liberated country as well. Talash, labeled as 'docufiction'[142] "truest revelation," "tragic," "melancholic,"[143] portrays that the grand narrative of the Liberation War is patriarchal, and it turned the war heroines into a mere rhetoric.[144] Merry's fictional story matches the fact that was published by the Guardian "the women's ordeal was hidden from view. They had to endure decades of shaming and isolation, discrimination that affected the next generation too."[145]

Escaping the ordeal

Novels themed on the partition loaded with stories of mass exodus. Those who moved to the safer side left their *bhita* and *desh* once and forever with no sign of hope to return. Contrarily, in novels themed on the Liberation War, refugees who moved to India waited to come back to their land.

Mass displacement is one of the main subjects of the novels focusing on the partition of India. The novel *Aagunpakhi* – the Firebird – depicts the nameless Muslim woman's life from her own point of view. She narrates how communal harmony in her Hindu-dominated village fell apart during the partition. After

the partition, all her family members, except she, moved to East Pakistan.[146] Like *Agunpakhi, Echamoteer Epar-Opar, Kalo Borof*, and *Ranga Probhat* also dealt with the issue.

However, displacement is not a prominent issue in the Liberation War novels. Only *Alatchokro* – Wheel of Fire – deals with refugee issues as both the main characters – Daniyel and Tayeba – moved to Kolkata during the liberation war. *Alatchokro* depicts West Bengal's socio-political condition as the state was flooded with nearly 10 million Bengali refugees during the time.[147] Short-term displacement was addressed in *Rifle Roti Aorat* and *Jeebon O Rajnoitik Bastobota*. Many characters including the main characters of the aforesaid novels left their residence temporarily and took refuge to other parts of the city or country as their area was attacked by the Pakistani Army. But they did not cross the border and many returned home shortly.

Pain, trauma, and nostalgia

The effects of partition were multilayered. The study found trauma, grief, emptiness, and longing in most of the partition novels while the emotional grief was illustrated in the Liberation War novels. In this category three sub-themes – trauma, grief, and emptiness and longing – were identified.

Apparently, it seems the protagonist Babar in *Khelaram Khele Jaa* is a sexual predator. Though, the writer gradually reveals him as a traumatized person who was haunted by the memory of losing his younger sister Hasnu to a rioter during the partition. Memories of blood-stained machete and whimpering Hasnu recurrently haunts Babar.[148] Caruth, quoting Freud, describes the condition as "traumatic neuroses."[149] *Khelaram Khele Jaa* is a rare partition novel from Bangladesh that draws attention to the psychological impact of the Partition. In *Jeebon O Rajnoitik Bastobota*, the main character Abdul Mazid was also traumatized with the memory of his sister's abduction and gruesome killing.[150] In *Rifle Roti Aorat* it was found that the main character Shudeepto, too, was traumatized by the violence.[151]

The novel *Maa* – Freedom's Mother – was based on a true story. The novel portrayed a mother's grief as her son, Azad, who was a member of a guerilla team during the Liberation War, was detained by the Pakistani Army and never returned home again. Azad's mother had an opportunity to visit her son in detention. During the visit, Azad asked his mother to bring *bhat* – boiled rice – and curry. With a big tiffin box full of *bhat* and curry the mother went to see Azad the next day. But she was told Azad had been moved to some other place. Shafia, the mother, searched for her son in all the possible places, but could not find Azad ever again, not even his dead body. From then Azad's mother stopped eating *bhat* – the staple food in Bangladesh – in grief as she could not feed her son.[152] She lived 14 long years after her son's disappearance but survived with indescribable grief. For Shafia, freedom was melancholic.

Majid also found freedom melancholic as many *razakars* rose to power in the liberated country due to political compromise while people like Majid who bear the burden of the war are cornered.[153]

The novel *Kalo Borof* represents emptiness and longing. Throughout the novel, the main character Abdul Khalek was nostalgic and drowned in his childhood memory. Sometimes, he was possessed by his memory and the line between past and present became blurred to him. Moni bhai, Giribala, Madhu, the one-legged bird and the blind beggar – all the characters from the past surround him.[154] Abdul Khalek's emptiness is condensed and unfathomable. The more intense Khalek's living-in-memory becomes, the more he feels associated with Poka – his childhood nick-name and feels disassociated with his present being – Khalek. Poka was devastated by the suicide of his immediate elder brother Moni Bhai as the attachment of the duo was profound. Khalek alias Poka with his whole heart believes Moni bhai killed himself because of the partition.[155]

Like Abdul Khalek, *Babar*'s longing and nostalgia for his homestead back in Bardhaman in West Bengal is also intense.[156] Hoimoboti, who moved to West Bengal after the killing of her husband Charubabu in the novel *Ranga Probhat*, also yearns for her *Desher Barhi* – home left in East Bengal.[157] The study found emptiness and longing as major elements in the partition novels.

Continuation of partition

Several characters in novels themed on the Liberation War believe the war of independence is an extension of the partition. Some features were common in novels that help to find the thread of the connection between the historic events. The following sub-themes – hatred toward the Bengali language, anti-Hindu and anti-Bengali, anti-Bengali culture, and quest for identity – are identified in this category.

Asgor Ali, a die-hard Pakistan supporter in *Alatchokro*, labeled Bengali language movement that took place in 1952 in East Pakistan as "*Hinduder Chokranto*" – a plot by Hindus.[158] In *Rifle Roti Aorat*, the author illustrates two-streams in the pre-liberation war Bangladeshi intelligentsia. The dominant one was pro Bengali language and culture. But the pro-Pakistani stream was hostile toward *Bangaliyana* – Bengaliness.[159] The novel portrays the pro-Pakistani Intelligentsia as haters of Bengali language while they advocate in favor of Urdu. The novel also narrates how the West Pakistani Government plotted to replace Bengali language in the textbooks with Urdu.

In *Rifle Roti Aorat* the writer illustrates that after the military crackdown in Dhaka on March 25, 1971, main character Shudeepto Shahin and his friend Firoz were driving toward a safe place to stay the night as Shudeepto's residential building was massacred by the attack. During the drive their car was stopped at a military check post in the Dhaka University area. While they

were waiting in the queue, they saw all the cars hang Pakistani national flag and every car's license plate was written in Urdu. Firoz noticed that only his car has no flag and only his car's number plate was in Bengali. Firoz wonders how all the people have changed their license from Bengali to Urdu overnight! The novel also narrates, during the operation searchlight, Dhaka University teacher Mridha Shaheb's life was saved by his wife's trick. During the attack almost everyone was killed at Mridha's building. When Pakistani army was about to fire Mridha, his wife begged for Mridhas life in fluent Urdu. Strangely, the trick worked, and attackers spared Mridha's life. At this point, satirically, the writer narrates "Tikka khan ordered to kill only Bengalis, not Urdu speakers."[160]

Hatred was expressed not only toward the Bengali language, but also toward Hindu and Bengali people. Many characters in the novels about the Liberation War feel that West Pakistani leaders were disrespectful toward Bengali people due to separate ethnic identity. These novels describe various incidents where Bengali Muslims were treated as either non-Muslim or not-true-Muslim. *Maa, Rifle Roti Aorat, Jeebon O rajnoitik Bastobota*, and *Alatchokro* describe many incidents how the Pakistani Army was deliberately killing Hindus and Bengalis as they were considered "other" in Muslim Pakistan.

One day, the main character Daniyel in *Alatchokro* was having a conversation with Hannan Shaheb and Shah Asgor Ali in Kolkata. Both the men are older and supported the Two Nation Theory. They wanted to know more about the on-going Liberation War from Daniyel. In reply, Daniyel expressed an optimistic view about the victory by saying "I don't know the whole scenario. But I know for sure, one day, victory will be ours." Observing the confidence in his voice, Asgor Ali stated that "Certainly, victory will come. But it is not you who will win. It will be the victory for Hindu's and Hindustan." He also added "you don't know, thousands have sacrificed their lives to establish Pakistan. Now, you guys are breaking it apart." Asgor also mentioned, "Bangladesh will be nothing but another Hindustan." At one point Daniyel asked Asgor, "Your love for Pakistan is intense, but why didn't you move to Pakistan after the partition?" In reply, Asgor stated, "I couldn't believe that East Pakistani Muslims would follow true Islam."[161] *Alatchokro* is rife with scenes of how the Pakistani military had been killing Hindu men and women out of their racial hatred. It tells how the Pakistani military and *razakars* burned and looted houses, and kidnapped Hindu women. The writer narrates, the Hindus who did not leave during partition, it is time to drive them out of Pakistan.

Rifle Roti Aorat is also loaded with examples of Pakistani militaries' anti-Hindu and anti-Bengali actions. *Rifle Roti Aorat* introduced the character *Chacha* – uncle – a distant relative of Firoz. Chacha was a strong Pakistani supporter and Hindu hater. In a conversation with *Chacha*, Shudeepto and Firoz were criticizing the Operation Searchlight. Chacha was strongly

supporting the military operation by stating "those who are killed, do you consider them Muslim? They are the enemy of the country. They are the Kafirs."[162] Another character Dr. Khalek mentioned "If the difference between Hindus and Muslims are not maintained then how Hindustan and Pakistan will be differentiated?" Khalek also added, "those who do not maintain the difference between Hindus and Muslim will be considered as anti-Pakistani, and they will be treated as enemy."[163]

Novels are also filled with the incidents where hatred toward Bengali customs, traditions, and culture were expressed by Pakistani leaders, militaries, and ultra-conservative pro-Pakistani Bengali Muslims. In *Hangor Nodi Grenade*, the singer Nita Baul (Baul is a particular type of sect found only in Bengal who use songs to express their thoughts) took refuge with her friend Buri as Nita's *Akhra* – a place where Nita and other Bauls live – was attacked and burnt during the liberation War. Her beloved partner Akhil Baul was killed and his *Dotara*, a musical instrument, was vandalized while Nita's *Dotara* was burnt into ashes.[164]

According to Islam, women are supposed to be in Purdah. But there were many Bengali Muslim women and girls who were not following purdah, and pro-Pakistani supporters like Chacha from *Rifle Roti Aorat*, Bodu Mollah from *Jeebon O rajnoitik Bastobota* did not like it. Music lover and singer Momena, a Muslim female character in *Jeebon O rajnoitik Bastobota*, used to perform at school programs and took part in church music. Bodu Mollah did not like it. Before the liberation war, one day, while Momena was returning home from a musical program, Bodu Mollah saw her and attacked her with abusive language by stating "*Maagi, dim parbar jaao*?" – You whore! Do you go there to lay eggs?[165] *Jeebon O Rajnoitik Bastobota* illustrates another incident where two razakars were uprooting Tulshi trees – Basil trees – from all the houses considering it a Hindu tree as Basil is worshiped by Hindus.[166]

In *Rifle Roti Aorat* writer illustrates a scene where *Shudeepto* was having a conversation with his colleague *Dr. Khalek* who always labeled Hindus as '*Malaun*'[167] – a derogatory word that gives a meaning similar to the word "*Kafir*" – over the death of a Jamaat-e-Islami activist who died in an intra-party clash. During the conversation Shudeepto, sarcastically, proposes Dr. Khalek to build a Shaheed Minar – a monument for Martyr – for the deceased activist as Dr. Khalek was very sympathetic to the deceased. Harshly Dr. Khalek replied, "*Etoi Malaun bhablen amader?*"–Do you consider us Malaun? Agitated Khalek also mentioned "Keep it in your mind, if the day comes and we get the opportunity, we will demolish the Shaeed Minar." Listening to the comment stupefied Shudeepto asked in disbelief, "Will you be demolishing Shaheed Minar!" Angrily Khalek replied "Yes! We will. You people are doing Kufri and doing Shirk [idolatry]. We will erect a mosque on the site by demolishing it."[168] After the Operation

Searchlight Shudeepto found that *Shaheed Minar* – the monument for language martyrs who died in 1952 as they were demanding Bengali as one of the state languages of Pakistan – was attacked and completely smashed to the ground. Besides, *Kali Mondir* – a Hindu temple, and the Bangla Academy – an institution to promote Bengali language was also situated in the university area were also attacked.[169]

Several novels found the Partition and the Liberation War interrelated regarding the formation of national identity. Creation of Pakistan was a result of Muslims' quest for establishing a separate state primarily based on their religious identity. However, the birth of Bangladesh was a result of building a nation based on language centric Bengali identity. Bengali nationalism embraces secularism over Islamic nationalism.[170]

The rise of Islamic Nationalism was depicted in *Ragna Probhat*.[171] The novel described the birth of Pakistan, metaphorically, a new dawn. On the contrary, Bengali Nationalism rose by refusing Islamic Nationalism. The novel focuses on the Liberation War and portrays that Pakistan was not a promised land for Bengalis. People of East Pakistan were disillusioned by experiencing political repression, economic disparity, racial discrimination and violence. *Maa, Alatchokro, Rifle Roti Aorat* depicted that East Pakistani people fought to create a new nation based on Bengali identity.

Conclusion: weeping in silence

The anonymous village woman who narrates her life in the novel *Agunpakhi*, at a point of her story, states that one day her husband told, "*Desh tomar swadhin hoyechhe*" – your country is liberated. In a sad tone, he also added "*Deshtake kete du bhag kore diye gelo*" – they have divided the country into two".[172] The novel *Ranga Probhat* echoed the same statement "*Desh shwadhin hoyechhe, desh bhag-o hoyechhe*" – the country has been liberated and divided as well.[173]

The partition has not only divided the country, but the people, too. The unnamed woman in *Agunpakhi* was in deep melancholy as all her family members – daughter, son, and husband – one by one, moved to Pakistan except her. Having a family divided by newly drawn border, she herself feels divided and mumbles "not even an individual person will remain undivided."[174] Everyone tried to convince her to move to Pakistan but failed. She stayed at her home, alone, and her unanswered question echoed in her mind, "*Kene jabo keu aamake bujhiye dik. Bujhiye dilei aami jabo*." – Could anyone explain why should I leave? I'll leave, if I get a convincing answer.[175] Like these village women, the cost of freedom was too high for Pronob babu who was a minor character in *Khelaram Khele Ja*. Being Hindu, his sons, daughters, and relatives moved to India, but he did not, and cannot even think of leaving his *desh*. He stated that "*Jara gechhe tara rattire desher dike mukh kore kande*" – those who left the country, cry in the night facing toward the

country.[176] Like these two characters, everyone – *Babar, Abdul Khalek, Montu*, Montu's grandfather who experienced the partition – regardless of their age, class, and gender – weeps in silence.

A similar consequence was found in the novels focusing on the liberation war. Azad's country was liberated, but he, like thousands of other sons from across the country, did not return home. Azad's mother, who was deeply saddened by losing her son, carried profound grief in an unimaginable way until her last breath. The saga of the mother's grief shows that the cost of freedom is not only the blood and bullets but also the tears and grief. Abdul Majid who lost his beloved sister Momena could not forget her for a single day. When he became the father of a daughter, he named the newborn girl after his sister. These novels all illustrate that the cost of freedom is high for the generations who went through these catastrophic events.

Literature bears witness that the war was not won only by warriors, but by the commoners like Buri, Shurma, Motin and many more. In the novel *Aguner Poroshmoni* Humayun Ahmed illustrates how the couple Shurma and Motin risked their lives by sheltering a guerrilla.[177] In *Hangor Nodi Grenade*, the village woman Buri ceded her only son to the Pakistani Army when they raided her house in search of *Muktijoddha*s – freedom fighters. Buri decided to save the hiding guerillas' because she considers *Muktijoddha*s lives more precious than others as they fight for their country. Her son was not able to join the war as he was mentally challenged. So, considering her son's death as her personal loss, she ceded her son to save the freedom fighters.[178]

This study wants to show how the fictional characters' lives were affected by the Partition and the Liberation War, how the events were perceived by them, and how the narratives of the Partition and the Liberation War have been presented in the novels. In the process of excavating collective memory, it was learned that partition was a two-edged sword for East Bengal. The study found that the partition was perceived as a new dawn by the groups who supported the Two Nation Theory. But partition "scarred those who lived through" violence, killing, and displacement.[179] In addition to that, the examined novels reflect that Pakistan was not a promised land for East Bengal as West Pakistan treated the people of this land with disrespect, deprived them of their political, economic, and cultural rights. Therefore, the people's war started as the Bengalis decided to terminate the relationship with Pakistan. The literature shows how the country was born through bloodbath. However, the examined novels show the freedom was melancholic to those who have lived through it.

Kabir's concept "post-amnesia" describes how a certain history can be omitted through trans-generational forgetfulness.[180] While looking for the novels on partition it was realized that the number of novels on the partition was few. In addition to that the pain, trauma and violence are also underrepresented. Study found that Kabir's trans-generational formula of

forgetfulness is actively working in Bangladesh regarding the partition memory. The idea of trans-generational forgetfulness is also applicable in understanding the history of the Liberation War. The literature shows that the country deprived the war heroines by pushing them into the darkest corner and murdered their stories by wrapping them in rock-solid silence through generations while male freedom fighters were worshiped and celebrated by society.

One of the central aims of this study was to look at the interrelation of the partition and the liberation war. So, the study asks the question, "Do the Bangladeshi fictional characters perceive the liberation war as the continuation of the partition"? It was found that there are characters from both the camps – pro and anti-liberation – who find the partition and the liberation war strongly interconnected. Pakistan was created on the basis of the two-nation theory, and Bengal was divided along a contagious religious line.[181] Literary works show that for the Pakistan supporters, the liberation war was their last effort to make Pakistan a Muslim country by resorting to ethnic cleansing and demolishing "others." On the contrary, to the Bengali nationalist supporters, the Liberation War was a do-or-die moment for unmaking the two-nation theory to create a new identity and a new country – Bangladesh – for all.

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